This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 08241409 9

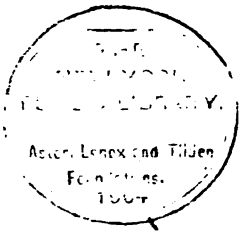
Digitized by Google

BA
Mayor
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Death of Mahomet

Digitized by Google

UNIVERSAL HISTORY,

ANCIENT AND MODERN;

FROM

THE EARLIEST RECORDS OF TIME,

TO

THE GENERAL PEACE OF 1801.

IN TWENTY-FIVE VOLUMES.

BY WILLIAM MAVOR, L. L. D.

VICAR OF HURLEY IN BERKSHIRE, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE EARL OF DUMFRIES.

Factorum est copia nobis.
Res gestæ regumque, ducumque, et tristia bella.

VOL. X.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY ISAAC COLLINS AND SON, FOR SAMUEL STANSBURY AND CO.

1804.

Digitized by Google

THE
NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
Astor, Lenox and Tilden
Foundations

Digitized by Google

THE

HISTORY

OF

THE ARABS;

INCLUDING

THE LIFE OF MOHAMMED.

BY WILLIAM MAVOR, L. L. D.

VICAR OF HURLEY IN BERKSHIRE, CHAPLAIN TO
THE EARL OF DUMFRIES,
AUTHOR OF THE BRITISH NEPOS, &c. &c.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY ISAAC COLLINS AND SON, FOR
SAMUEL STANSBURY AND CO.

1804.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF DUMFRIES,

ONE OF THE SIXTEEN REPRESENTATIVE

PEERS OF SCOTLAND,

&c. &c. &c.

THIS FIRST VOLUME

OF

MODERN HISTORY,

IS,

WITH SINCERE ESTEEM AND REGARD,

INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST DEVOTED SERVANT,

AND CHAPLAIN,

THE EDITOR.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE conclusion of the first general division of this work, naturally invites a pause, and a review of what has been accomplished. In tracing the progress and the decline of so many nations, and once powerful empires, that now exist only in the page of history, it is impossible not to indulge in a variety of reflections, equally interesting to the moralist, the philosopher and the politician. Like the fate of individuals, some of the nations that have fallen under notice, have had a short, some a moderate, and some a protracted existence. Their fortunes too have been as different as their duration: a few have filled the world with the fame of their exploits, others have walked in a middle path, or acted a subordinate part, while a vast proportion are remembered by little more than their names. All, however, whether long or short their destiny, whether brilliant or ignoble their career, have at last been resolved into their original principles, or absorbed in the general mass of being, under new titles, distinctions, and modifications.

Digitized by Google

The Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the ancient Persians, and the Macedonians, either successively held the sceptre of empire, or were distinguished from the other nations of the earth, by the splendors of conquest, or the refinements of civilization. Sometimes, like counter-currents in the ocean, two or more nations have been engaged in conflict for superiority; sometimes one has carried all before it, and stood unrivalled and alone: the tide of empire, indeed, has ebbed and flowed with irregular force, occasionally overwhelming whole regions, while it has deserted others; but the preceding wave of power, however formidable, has always been swallowed up by a succeeding one still greater; and a few vestiges of ancient nations, which time has not been able to efface, alone convey to the evidence of our senses, a confirmation of what the pen of history has handed down to us concerning their fortunes.

Greece and Rome, with all their glory in arts and in arms, could not withstand the combined effects of years and natural causes; and posterity will unquestionably have occasion to make similar remarks, in regard to kingdoms and states which are now flourishing in full vigour, and challenging the admiration of the world.

Of all the people of antiquity, perhaps the Jews preserve their original language

Digitized by Google

and institutions in the greatest purity, though they have long ceased to have a local habitation; and from their unerring records, we have derived the most valuable information respecting contiguous and contemporary nations; yet, in addition to whatever has been left us, both by sacred and profane historians, whose works have been accessible to our predecessors, we have endeavoured to obtain new lights from the stores of Oriental and Egyptian literature, which modern diligence and research have happily developed. It should be observed, however, that the Hindoos, not only remaining an unmixed nation, but also retaining most of their pristine usages, and though frequently subjugated, still occupying the country that first produced them, it was judged expedient to give a connected history of India, from the earliest existing records to the present time. The intelligent reader, indeed, will perceive, that on a variety of occasions we have already had recourse to its literary monuments, but these will be more particularly unfolded in some of the subsequent volumes.

The lines between Ancient and Modern History, like those which separate the different classes of animated and vegetable nature, are often undefined and obscure; but provided no portion of our design is neglected, it matters little under what head it is placed. Yet it may not be amiss to remark,

Digitized by Google

that we have carried on the history of every distinct nation till its power and its name were merged in another, or till some extraordinary revolution took place, which altered its original constitution, and obliterated its native character. For instance, the histories of Greece, of Carthage, and of Egypt, are detailed till they became provinces to all-conquering Rome; and, on the other hand, the Roman affairs are continued not only to the termination of the WESTERN Empire, which forms a frequent but imperfect conclusion, but to the extinction of the EASTERN Empire by the Turks.

The Christian æra, indeed, which chronologers generally use as the boundary between ancient and modern times, can never be adopted by the historian without manifest confusion. It is always requisite to come to some precise and well-marked epoch in the history of each particular nation, that the mind may repose on it with satisfaction, and the judgment review it with distinctness. This we mention rather to explain what we consider to be our legitimate province, than to obviate apparent objections.

Hitherto our success has been most flattering; but instead of presuming on public favour for what we have already performed, we feel ourselves only stimulated to new exertions, that we may confirm the partiality we have gained. New prospects open to

Digitized by Google

our view, and new facilities of execution present themselves, as we approach the period of authentic narration. The mists which obscure transactions long past, and the fabulous traditions in which they are involved, will perplex our path no more, or only in a smaller degree; and though it is usual for prejudice to warp the native historian, as general reviewers and recorders of human affairs, we hope to steer free from its baneful influence. In order to accomplish this the more effectually, we mean to postpone the accounts of France and Great Britain to a distant part of our work. Recent events, in which men are either agents or sufferers, are apt to dazzle and confound; but when time has blunted the edge of feeling, and the judgment has corrected the illusions of the brain, and the errors of the heart, it is less difficult to think and write with impartiality, and to find the public ready to listen to the decisions of truth. Farther, we do not feel it necessary to pledge ourselves to any specific arrangement; except that our concluding volume is intended to be wholly devoted to various chronological and biographical tables, essentially requisite for the illustration of the subject of our undertaking, and to the construction of a copious and luminous index.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MODERN HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE ARABS.

WE are now entering upon a new and more interesting period of history, in which the aspect of the universe is changed. The aspiring genius of the Arabian Prophet grasped at universal empire: and the standard of this enthusiastic conqueror, and the banners of his successors, the Arabs, became powerful, and extended their dominion in Asia, Africa, and even into Europe.

THE LIFE OF MOHAMMED.

THE character of no person, celebrated in history, has been contemplated in more different lights than that of Mohammed, the legislator of the Arabs. By some writers, he has been represented as an ignorant impostor, and a man of the most dissolute morals. Others have not scrupled to pronounce him one of the most eminent legislators that ever appeared in the world. While, however, we admit that Mohammed had great talents, we must acknowledge, that, as in all other men, a mixture of good and bad qualities was conspicuous in his character.

According to eastern writers, Mohammed descended in a direct line from Ishmael, the son of Abraham, but by more modern historians this fact has been doubted: if, however, the first steps of the pedigree be obscure, it is certain, he

Digitized by Google

could refer to many generations of pure and genuine nobility. He sprung from the tribe of Koreish, and the family of Hashem, the most illustrious of the Arabs, the princes of Mecca, and the hereditary guardians of the Caaba. The grandfather of Mohammed was Abdol Motalleb, the son of Hashem, a wealthy and generous citizen, who relieved the distresses of famine, with the supplies of commerce. Mecca, which had been fed by the liberality of the father, was saved by the courage of the son. The kingdom of Yemen was subject to the Christian princes of Abyssinia; their vassal Abrahah was provoked by an insult, to avenge the honour of the cross, and the holy city was invested by a train of elephants and an army of Africans. A treaty was proposed; and in the first audience the grandfather of Mohammed demanded the restitution of his cattle. "And why," said Abrahah, "do you not rather implore my clemency in favour of your temple, which I have threatened to destroy?" "Because," replied the hero, "the cattle is my own, the Caaba belongs to the gods, and *they* will defend their house from injury and sacrilege." The Abyssinians were compelled to make a disgraceful retreat, and the deliverance of Mecca was long commemorated by the æra of the elephant. The glory of Abdol Motalleb was crowned with domestic happiness, and he became the father of six daughters and thirteen sons. His best beloved son Abdallah, the most beautiful of the Arabian youth, married Amina; from these sprung Mohammed, who was born at Mecca, two months after the defeat of the Abyssinians. In his early infancy, he was deprived of his father, mother,

A. D. 569.

Digitized by Google

and grandfather; his uncles were strong and numerous, and in the division of the inheritance the orphan's share was reduced to five camels, and an Ethiopian maid-servant. Abu Taleb, the most respectable of his uncles, was the guide and guardian of his youth; in his twenty-fifth year he married Cadijah, a rich and noble widow of Mecca. By this alliance the son of Abdallah was restored to the station of his ancestors, and in the fortieth year of his age, he assumed the title of a prophet, and proclaimed the religion of the Koran.

Mohammed was distinguished for the beauty of his person: before he spoke, the orator, by his personal accomplishments, engaged on his side the affections of his audience. They applauded his commanding presence, his majestic aspect, his piercing eye, his gracious smile, his flowing beard, his countenance, that painted every sensation of his soul, and his gestures that enforced each expression of the tongue. In the familiar offices of life, he scrupulously adhered to the grave and ceremonious politeness of his country; his attention to the rich was dignified by his condescension to the poorest citizens of Mecca: the frankness of his manner concealed the artifice of his views; and the habits of courtesy were imputed to personal friendship, or universal benevolence. His memory was retentive, his wit easy, his imagination sublime, his judgment clear and decisive. He possessed the courage both of thought and action; and the first idea which he entertained of his divine mission bears the stamp of an original and superior genius. But, with all the powers of eloquence, Mohammed was an illiterate barbarian; his youth

Digitized by Google

had never been instructed in the arts of reading and writing. The common ignorance, however, exempted him from shame or reproach; but he was deprived of those faithful mirrors, which reflect to our mind the minds of sages and heroes: yet the book of nature and of man was open to his view. In his youth he had made two journies to the fairs of Bostra and Damascus: in these excursions the eye of genius might discern some objects invisible to his grosser companions; some seeds of knowledge might be cast upon a fruitful soil: but his prospect does not appear to have extended beyond the limits of the Arabian world. From every region of that solitary country, the pilgrims at Mecca were annually assembled, by the calls of devotion and commerce: in the free intercourse of multitudes, a simple citizen, in his native tongue, might study the political state and character of the tribes, the theory and practice of the Jews and Christians. Conversation enriches the understanding, but solitude is the school of genius; and the uniformity of a work denotes the hand of a single artist. From his earliest youth, Mohammed was addicted to religious contemplation: each year during the month Ramadan, he withdrew from the world, and from the arms of Cadijah; and in the cave of Hera, three miles from Mecca, he laid the plans of his future conduct.

Mohammed, pretending that his grand article of faith, the unity of the divine nature, was violated by the rest of the world, by Christians and Jews, as well as by professed idolaters, resolved to make an attempt to rescue the world from the ignorance and superstition in which it

Digitized by Google

was involved. As a previous step, he thought it necessary to convert his household. Having, therefore, retired with his family to a cave in Mount Hera, he opened the secret of his mission to his wife, and acquainted her, that the angel Gabriel had just appeared to him, and told him, that he was appointed the apostle of God.

Our prophet was about forty years of age when he began to set up for a reformer, which is usually called the year of his mission. He soon made proselytes of those under his own roof, and then he applied himself with equal success to his uncle Abu Becr, a man of very considerable authority, and whose interest was of great service to him.

Abu Becr, by his example and influence, gained Mohammed a considerable number of proselytes; on which account the prophet gave him the surname of Al Seddik, signifying *the faithful witness*. For the space of three years, during which term he pretended to have received frequent revelations, the apostle only instructed his votaries in private; being under some apprehensions of the resentment of the Koreish; the bulk of which tribe did by no means favour his undertaking. However, Abu Becr persisted in his fidelity, and, having formed a sufficient party to support him, Mohammed made his mission no longer a secret, but declared that God had commanded him to admonish his near relations. To do this with more convenience, and a better prospect of success, he directed Ali, his cousin, whom, from his infancy, he had taken under his protection, to prepare an entertainment, and invite the sons and descen-

Digitized by Google

dants of Abd'al Motalleb; intending then to open his mind to them. At a second invitation, Mohammed made the following speech:—"I know no man among the Arabs who can propose to his relations any thing more excellent than what I now do to you: in the name of God, I offer you felicity for this world, and for that which is to come." All of them hesitating, Ali arose, and vehemently exclaimed, "O prophet of God, I will be thy servant, and destroy those who dare to oppose thee." Upon this declaration Mohammed embraced Ali, and commanded the persons present to obey him, as his deputy, and as one whom he appointed his successor. From this time Mohammed began to preach in public to the people; some of whom heard him with patience, but the majority became his avowed enemies, which led his uncle to endeavour to dissuade him from his project: but Mohammed was not to be intimidated; he declared, that if the sun was set against him on his right hand, and the moon on his left, he would not leave off his enterprize. He continued to discharge his apostolic functions with the greatest assiduity, which drew upon him and his followers the persecution of the Koreish tribe, who entered into a written covenant against them; so that it was no longer safe for them to remain at Mecca. They fled by night into Ethiopia, to the number of about one hundred persons, besides children. By the king of that country they were protected, which so incensed the Koreish, that they resolved, if possible, to exterminate the new religion, which seemed to be making progress among the Arabs. Mohammed himself found protection with his uncle at Mecca, though he was often assailed by the

Digitized by Google

most violent attacks. In the tenth year of his mission, Mohammed told Abu Taleb that God had manifestly shewn his disapprobation of the covenant entered into by the Koreish, by sending a worm to eat out every word of the instrument, except the name of God. Of this accident he had probably received some private notice, for Abu Taleb went immediately to the Koreish, and, having acquainted them with it, offered, if it proved false, to deliver his nephew up to them; but, in case it were true, he stipulated, that they should lay aside their animosity. The writing was examined, Mohammed's pretensions as a prophet were recognized, and the league declared void.

Soon after this memorable event Mohammed lost his uncle, and in less than a month after the death of this his great benefactor and patron, his wife Cadijah died, in the sixty-fifth year of her age. Two such unfortunate events could not but prove extremely prejudicial to the prophet's affairs. For which reason, this year is called by the Mohammedans the year of mourning. The Koreish again began to harass the prophet and his friends, so that he was obliged to seek shelter at Taef, about sixty miles east of Mecca, where he was, for a while, kindly entertained; but, at length, the lower orders of the people rose against him, and obliged him to return to Mecca.

This repulse greatly discouraged the new converts, but the prophet continued to preach boldly at the public assemblies of the pilgrims, who resorted to Mecca, against idolatry, though, by so doing, he exposed his life to danger. A conspiracy was formed against him, which was re-

Digitized by Google

vealed by a spy, and flight was the only resource of Mohammed. At dead of night, accompanied by his friend Abu Becr, he escaped from his house: the assassins watched at the door, but were deceived by the figure of Ali. Three days they were concealed in a cave about a league from Mecca, and were supplied secretly with food. The Koreish explored every haunt about the city; they even arrived at the entrance of the cavern; but the deceit of a spider's web, and pigeon's nest, led them to believe the place was solitary and inviolate. "We are only two," said the trembling Abu Becr. "There is a third," replied the prophet, "it is God himself." No sooner was the pursuit abated, than the two fugitives issued from the rock, mounted their camels, and made their retreat to Medina. The flight of the prophet from Mecca to Medina has fixed the memorable æra of the Hegira, which, after the lapse of twelve centuries, still discriminates the lunar years of the Mohammedan nations.

A. D. 622.

The religion of the Koran might have perished in its cradle, had not Medina embraced with faith and reverence the holy outcasts of Mecca. Some of the noblest citizens of Medina had, in a pilgrimage to the Caaba, been converted by the preaching of Mohammed, and, on their return, had diligently diffused the belief of God and his prophet: a new alliance was ratified by their deputies in two secret and nocturnal interviews, on a hill in the suburbs of Mecca. Seventy-three men and two women of Medina held a solemn conference with Mohammed, and pledged themselves to each other by a mutual oath of fidelity. They promised to receive him

Digitized by Google

as a confederate, to obey him as a leader, and defend him as they would their wives and children. "But," said they, "if you are recalled to your country, will you not abandon us?" "All things," replied the prophet, "are now common between us; your blood is as my blood; your ruin as mine: I am your friend, and the enemy of your foes." "But, if we are killed in your service, what will be our reward?" "PARADISE," replied Mohammed. "Stretch forth thy hand." He stretched it out, and they reiterated the oath of allegiance and fidelity. Their treaty was ratified by the people, who unanimously embraced the profession of Islam; they rejoiced in the exile of the apostle, but they trembled for his safety, and impatiently waited his arrival. Sixteen days after his flight from Mecca, he arrived at Medina, and made a public and splendid entrance into the city. Mohammed was mounted on a camel, an umbrella shaded his head, and a turban was unfurled before him as a standard.

From his establishment at Medina, Mohammed assumed the exercise of the regal and sacerdotal office; and it was deemed impious to appeal from a judge whose decrees were inspired by divine wisdom. A small portion of ground, the patrimony of two orphans, was obtained by gift or purchase: on that chosen spot he built an house and a mosque, more venerable than the temples and palaces of the Assyrian caliphs. His seal of gold was inscribed with the apostolic title: when he prayed and preached in the weekly assembly, he leaned against a trunk of a palm-tree; and it was long before he indulged himself in the use of a chair or pulpit of rough

Digitized by Google

timber. After a reign of six years, fifteen hundred Mussulmen, in arms and in the field, renewed their oath of allegiance; and, in return, their chief promised the assurance of his protection. It was in the same camp that the deputy of Mecca was astonished by the attention of the faithful to the words and looks of the prophet. "I have seen," said he, "the Chosroes of Persia, and the Cæsars of Rome, but never did I behold a king among his subjects, like Mohammed among his companions." The devout fervour of enthusiasm acts with more energy and truth than the cold servility of courts.

Mohammed, in the exercise of his mission, had been despoiled and banished by the injustice of his countrymen. The choice of an independent people had exalted the fugitive of Mecca to the rank of a sovereign, and he was invested with the prerogative of forming alliances and making war. The means of persuasion had been tried, the season of forbearance was elapsed; the prophet assumed a fiercer and more sanguinary tone. He declared that he was now enjoined to propagate his religion by the sword, to destroy the monuments of idolatry, and to pursue the unbelieving nations of the earth. The option of friendship, or submission, or battle, was proposed to the enemies of Mohammed. If they professed the creed of Islam, they were admitted to all the temporal and spiritual benefits of his primitive disciples, and marched under the same banner, to extend the religion which they had embraced. In the first months of his reign, he practised the lessons of holy warfare, and displayed his white banner before the gates of Medina. He fought in per-

Digitized by Google

son at nine battles, and fifty enterprises of war were achieved in ten years, by himself and officers. The distribution of the spoil was regulated by a divine law; the whole was faithfully collected in one mass: a fifth of the gold and silver, the prisoners and cattle, the moveables and immoveables, was reserved by the prophet for pious and charitable uses; the remainder was shared in adequate portions, by the soldiers who had obtained the victory: the rewards of the slain devolved to their widows and orphans; and the increase of cavalry was encouraged by the allotment of a double share to the horse and the man. From all sides, the roving Arabs were allured to the standard of religion and plunder: the apostles sanctified the license of embracing the female captives as their wives, or concubines; and the enjoyment of wealth and beauty was a feeble type of the joys of paradise prepared for the valiant martyrs of the faith. "The sword," says Mohammed, "is the key of heaven and of hell: a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting and prayer: whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven; at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion, and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubims." The intrepid souls of the Arabs were fired with enthusiasm; the picture of the invisible world was strongly painted on their imaginations; and the death which they had always despised, now became an object of hope and desire. The first companions of Mohammed advanced to battle with a fearless confidence; they believed in the

Digitized by Google

doctrine of absolute predestination; where there is no chance, there can be no danger; they were safe and invulnerable amidst the darts of the enemy.

The sacred band of Mohammed consisted of three hundred and thirteen; of whom seventy-seven were fugitives, and the rest auxiliaries: they mounted by turns a train of seventy camels, for such was the poverty of his first disciples, that only two could appear on horseback in the field. In the famous vale of Beder, three stations from Medina, he was informed by his scouts, of the caravan that approached on one side, and of a troop of Koreish, nearly a thousand strong, on the other. After a short debate, he sacrificed the prospect of wealth to the pursuit of glory and revenge. A slight entrenchment was formed to cover his troops, and a stream of fresh and limpid water glided the valley. "O God!" he exclaimed, as the Koreish descended from the hills, if these are destroyed, by whom wilt thou be worshipped on earth?—Courage, my children, close your ranks, discharge your arrows, and the day is your own." At these words he placed himself with Abu Becr on a throne or pulpit, and demanded the succour of Gabriel and three thousand angels. His eye was fixed on the field of battle, the Mussulmen fainted, and were pressed: in that decisive moment the prophet started from the throne, mounted his horse, and cast a handful of sand into the air, crying out, "let their faces be covered with confusion." Both armies heard the thunder of his voice; their fancy beheld the angelic warriors: the Koreish trembled and fled; seventy of the bravest were slain,

Digitized by Google

and seventy captives adorned the first victory of the faithful. The rich caravan of Abu Sophian was overtaken by the Mussulmen, plundered, and the spoil divided. Public and private resentment for the loss stimulated Abu Sophian to collect a body of three thousand men; his wife Henda, with fifteen matrons from Mecca, incessantly sounded their timbrels to animate their troops, and to magnify the greatness of Hobal, the most popular deity of the Caaba. The standard of Mohammed was upheld by nine hundred and fifty believers. The second battle was fought six miles north of Medina: the Koreish advanced in the form of a crescent. The troops of Mohammed were skilfully posted on the declivity of a hill; their rear was guarded by a detachment of fifty archers. Disorder and disobedience invaded the ranks of the Mussulmen; while the intrepid general of the idolaters wounded the prophet, and exclaimed that Mohammed was slain! But, in the midst of tumult and dismay, he lived to reproach the infidels with the intended murder of a prophet, and blessed the friendly hand that staunched his blood, and conveyed him to a place of safety. Seventy martyrs died for the sins of the people; they fell, said the apostle, in pairs, each brother embracing his lifeless companion: their bodies were mangled by the inhuman females of Mecca, and the wife of Abu Sophian tasted the entrails of Hamza, the uncle of Mohammed. The Mussulmen soon rallied in the field, and the Koreish wanted courage to lay siege to Medina. In the ensuing year it was attacked by an army of ten thousand enemies: the prudence of Mohammed declined a general engagement; the

Digitized by Google

valour of Ali was signalized in single combat; and the war was protracted twenty days, till the final separation of the confederates. A tempest of wind and hail overturned their tents; and the Koreish, deserted by their allies, no longer hoped to subvert the throne, or check the conquests of their invincible exile.

The choice of Jerusalem for the first kebla of prayer discovers the early propensity of Mohammed, in favour of the Jews. Their obstinacy converted his friendship into hatred, with which he pursued that unfortunate people to the last moment of his life. In the double character of an apostle and conqueror, his persecution was extended to both worlds. The Kainoka dwelt at Medina, under the protection of the city: he seized the occasion of an accidental tumult, and summoned them to embrace his religion, or contend with him in battle. "Alas!" replied the trembling Jews, "we are ignorant of the use of arms, but we persevere in the faith and worship of our fathers; why wilt thou reduce us to the necessity of self-defence?" The unequal conflict was terminated in fifteen days: Mohammed spared the lives of his captives, but confiscated their riches, and seized their arms. The Nadhirites were more guilty, since they conspired to assassinate the prophet. He besieged their castle, three miles from Medina, but their resolute defence obtained an honourable capitulation: but the Jews at Koraidha surrendered at discretion. They trusted to the intercession of their old allies at Medina; they could not be ignorant that fanaticism obliterates the feelings of humanity. A venerable elder, to whose judgment they appealed, pronounced

Digitized by Google

the sentence of death: seven hundred Jews were dragged in chains to the market-place of the city; they descended alive into the grave prepared for their execution and burial; and the apostle beheld with an inflexible eye the slaughter of his helpless enemies. Six days journey to the north-east of Medina, the ancient town of Chaibar, was the seat of the Jewish power in Arabia; the territory was covered with plantations and cattle, and protected by eight castles, some of which were esteemed impregnable. The forces of Mohammed consisted of two hundred horse and fourteen hundred foot: in the succession of eight regular and painful sieges they were exposed to danger and fatigue, and hunger; and the most undaunted chiefs despaired of the event. The apostle revived their courage by the example of Ali, on whom he bestowed the surname of the Lion of God. Chaibar submitted; the chief was tortured, in the presence of Mohammed, to force a confession of his hidden treasure: the industry of the shepherds was rewarded with a precarious toleration; they were permitted to improve their patrimony for their own emolument, and that of the conqueror. Under the reign of Omar, the Jews of Chaibar were transplanted to Syria; and the caliph alleged the injunction of his dying master, that one and the true religion should be professed in his native land of Arabia.

Five times each day were the eyes of Mohammed turned towards Mecca, and he was urged by the most powerful motives to revisit, as a conqueror, the city and the temple from whence he had been driven as an exile. The Caaba was present to his waking and sleeping fancy, an

Digitized by Google

idle dream was translated into vision and prophecy; he unfurled the holy banner, and a rash promise of success too hastily dropped from the lips of the apostle. His march from Medina to Mecca displayed the solemn pomp of a pilgrimage; seventy camels bedecked the sacrifice, and preceded the van; the sacred territory was respected, and the captives were dismissed without ransom, to proclaim his clemency and devotion. No sooner did Mohammed come within a day's journey of the city, than he exclaimed, "they have clothed themselves with the skins of tygers!" The numbers and resolution of the Koreish opposed his progress; and the roving Arabs of the desert might desert or betray a leader whom they had followed for the hopes of spoil. The prophet concluded a truce with the Koreish for ten years, and stipulated only for the humble privilege of entering the city as a friend, and of remaining three days, to accomplish the rites of the pilgrimage. Shame and sorrow attended the retreat of the Mussulmen, and they were ready to accuse the failure of a prophet, who had so often appealed to the evidence of success. The faith and hope of the pilgrims were rekindled by the prospects of Mecca; their swords were sheathed; seven times in the footsteps of the apostle they encompassed the Caaba; the Koreish had retired to the hills, and Mohammed, after the customary sacrifice, evacuated the city on the fourth day. The people were edified by his devotion; the hostile chiefs were awed, or divided, or seduced; and both Caled and Amroce, the future conquerors of Syria and Egypt, deserted the sinking cause of idolatry. The power of Moham-

Digitized by Google

med was increased by the submission of the Arabian tribes; ten thousand soldiers were assembled for the conquest of Mecca, and the idolaters were easily convicted of violating the truce. Enthusiasm and discipline impelled the march, and preserved the secret, till the blaze of ten thousand fires proclaimed to the astonished Koreish the design, the approach, and the irresistible force of the enemy. Abu Sophian presented to the conqueror the keys of the city, observing that the son of Abdallah had acquired a mighty kingdom, and confessed that he was the apostle of the true God. Mohammed, instead of indulging his revenge, and that of his followers, forgave and united the factions of Mecca. His troops marched into the city, and the chiefs of the Koreish were prostrate at his feet. "What mercy can you expect from the man whom you have wronged?"—"We confide in the generosity of our kinsman."—"And you shall not confide in vain: begone! you are safe; you are free." The people of Mecca deserved their pardon by adopting the profession of Islam; and, after an exile of seven years, the fugitive missionary was enthroned, as the prince and prophet of his native country. Three hundred and sixty idols of the Caaba were ignominiously broken; the house of God was purified and adorned; the apostle fulfilled the duties of a pilgrim, as an example to future ages; and a law was enacted, that no unbeliever should dare to set his foot on the territory of the holy city.

The conquest of Mecca determined the faith and obedience of the Arabian tribes, but an obstinate remnant still adhered to the religion

Digitized by Google

and liberty of their ancestors, and a war of Honain derived a proper appellation from the *idols*, which Mohammed had vowed to destroy, and which the confederates of Tayef had sworn to defend. Four thousand pagans advanced with secrecy to surprise the conqueror; they pitied and despised the negligence of the Koreish, but depended on the aid of those who had lately bowed beneath the yoke of their enemy. The banners of Medina and Mecca were displayed by the prophet. Twelve thousand Mussulmen entertained a rash presumption of their invincible strength: they descended, without precaution, into the valley of Honain; their numbers were oppressed; their discipline confounded; their courage was appalled by the archers of the confederates; while the Koreish smiled at their impending destruction. The prophet, on his white mule, was encompassed by enemies; he attempted to rush against their spears, in search of a glorious death; ten of his faithful companions interposed their weapons and their breasts: three of these fell dead at his feet. "O my brethren," he cried with sorrow and indignation, "I am the son of Abdallah, I am the apostle of truth! O man, stand fast in the faith! O God, send down thy succour!" His uncle, Abbas, made the valley resound with the recital of the gifts and promises of God; the flying Mussulmen returned from all sides to the holy standard; and Mohammed observed, with pleasure, that the furnace was again rekindled: his example restored the battle, and he animated his victorious troops to inflict a merciless revenge on the authors of their shame. From the field of Honain he marched, without delay, to the

Digitized by Google

siege of Tayef, sixty miles to the south-east of Mecca. A friendly tribe, instructed in the art of warfare, supplied him with a train of battering rams, military engines, and with a body of five hundred artificers. After, however, a siege of twenty days, the prophet was forced to sound a retreat, affecting to pray for the repentance and safety of the unbelieving city. The spoil of this unfortunate expedition was immense: to compensate the loss of a tribe who had fought at Honain, and who redeemed their prisoners by the sacrifice of their idols, he resigned to the soldiers his fifth part of the plunder. Instead of chastising the disaffection of the Koreish, he endeavoured to secure their attachment, by a superior measure of liberality. To their leader, Abu Sophian, he presented three hundred camels, and twenty ounces of silver; and by these means, Mecca was sincerely converted to the profitable religion of the Koran.

Some deputies from Tayef, dreading the repetition of the siege, followed the prophet, suing for a truce of three years, with the toleration of their ancient worship. "Not a month, not an hour," replied Mohammed. "Excuse us, at least, from the obligation of prayer."—"Without prayer, religion is of no avail." They submitted in silence; their temples were demolished; and the same sentence of destruction was executed on all the idols of Arabia. His lieutenants, on the shores of the Red Sea, the Ocean, and the gulf of Persia, were saluted by the acclamation of a faithful people; and the ambassadors who knelt before the throne of Medina were as numerous, says the Arabian proverb, as the dates which fall from the pa-

Digitized by Google

turity of a palm-tree. The nation submitted to God and the sceptre of Mohammed, and one hundred and fourteen thousand Mussulmen accompanied the last pilgrimage of the apostle.

When Heraclius, a Roman emperor, returned in triumph from the Persian war, he entertained one of the ambassadors of Mohammed; which the real Arabians have supposed was the secret cause of the conversion of the Christian emperor. But the friendship of Heraclius and Mohammed was of short continuance; the new religion had enflamed the rapacious spirit of the Saracens, and the murder of an envoy, afforded a decent pretence for invading the territory of Palestine. The holy banner was entrusted to Leid, and, on the event of his decease, Iaafar and Abdallah were substituted to the command; and if the three should perish in the war, the troops were authorised to elect their own general. The three leaders were slain in the battle of Muta, the first military action which tried the valour of the Mussulmen against a foreign enemy. Leid fell in the foremost ranks: the death of Iaafar was heroic and memorable; he lost his right hand, and shifted his standard to the left; the left was severed from his body; he embraced the standard with the bleeding stumps, till he was transfixed to the ground, with fifty honourable wounds. "Advance," cried Abdallah, who stepped into the vacant place, "advance with confidence; either victory or paradise is our own." The lance of the Roman decided the alternative; but the falling standard was rescued by Caled, the proselyte of Mecca: and nine swords were broken in his hand. He was chosen to the command; his skilful evolutions secured

Digitized by Google

victory or retreat to the Saracens; and Caled is renowned among his brethren and enemies, as the *sword of God*. In the pulpit, Mohammed described, with prophetic rapture, the crowns of the blessed martyrs, but in private he betrayed the feelings of human nature; he was surprised as he wept over the daughter of Leid. "What do I see!" said an astonished votary. "You see," replied the apostle, "a friend deploring the loss of his most faithful friend." After the conquest of Mecca, the sovereign of Arabia declared war against the Romans: his followers were discouraged; they alleged the want of money, or horses, or provisions; the season of harvest, and the intolerable heat of the summer. "Hell is much hotter," said the indignant prophet. He disdained to compel their service; but, on his return, he admonished the most guilty by an excommunication of fifty days. The desertion of the faithless enhanced the merit of those who devoted their lives and fortunes, and Mohammed displayed his banner at the head of thirty thousand troops. Painful indeed was the distress of the march; ten men rode by turns on the same camel, and they were reduced to the shameful necessity of drinking the water from the belly of that useful animal. In the midway, between Medina and Damascus, they reposed near the grove and fountain of Tabac. Beyond that place Mohammed declined the prosecution of the war; but the active Caled spread terror round his name, and the prophet received the submission of the tribes and cities, from the Euphrates to Ailah, at the head of the Red Sea. To his Christian subjects Mohammed granted security, freedom, and the toleration of their

Digitized by Google

worship. They were unable to oppose his ambition; and it was the interest of the conqueror to propose a fair capitulation, to the most powerful religion of the earth.

Till the age of sixty-three years, the strength of Mohammed was fully equal to the fatigues of his mission. During four years his health declined; his infirmities increased; but his mortal disease was a fever of fourteen days, which deprived him, by intervals, of the use of reason. As soon as he was conscious of his danger, he edified his brethren by the humility of his virtue or penitence. "If there be any man," said the apostle from the pulpit, "whom I have unjustly scourged, I submit my own back to the lash of retaliation. Have I aspersed the reputation of a Mussulman? let him proclaim my faults in the face of the congregation. Has any one been despoiled of his goods? the little that I possess shall compensate the principal and interest of the debt."—"Yes," replied a voice from the crowd, "I am entitled to three drachms of silver." Mohammed heard the complaint, satisfied the demand, and thanked his creditor for accusing him in this world, rather than at the day of judgment. He beheld with temperate firmness the approach of death; enfranchised his slaves; gave orders respecting his funeral; and bestowed a blessing on his weeping friends. Till the third day before his death, he regularly performed the function of prayer: the choice of Abu Becr to supply his place, appeared to mark that ancient and faithful friend, as the successor to his office; but he declined a more explicit nomination. At a moment when his faculties

A. D. 632. June 7.

Digitized by Google

were visibly impaired, he called for pen and ink to write, or rather to dictate, a divine book, the sum and accomplishment of all his revelations: a dispute arose in his chamber, whether he should be allowed to supersede the authority of the Koran; and the prophet was forced to reprove the indecent vehemence of his disciples. He had asserted, that the angel of death was not allowed to take his soul, till he had respectfully asked the permission of the prophet. The request was granted, and Mohammed fell into the agony of dissolution; he fainted with the violence of pain, but, recovering his spirits a little, he raised his eyes toward the roof of the house, and, with a steady look, though a faltering voice, uttered the last broken, though articulate words: "O God!.....pardon my sins. .....Yes.....I come....among my fellow-citizens on high;" and in this manner he peaceably expired, on a carpet spread upon the floor.

An expedition for the conquest of Syria was stopped by this mournful event: the army halted at the gates of Medina, and the chiefs were assembled round their dying master. The city, but especially the house of the prophet, was a scene of clamorous sorrow or silent despair: fanaticism alone could suggest a ray of hope and consolation. They expected his speedy return, and that, like Moses and Jesus, he was wrapt in a holy trance. The evidence of sense was disregarded, and Omar, unsheathing his scimitar, threatened to strike off the heads of the infidels, who should dare to affirm that the prophet was no more. The tumult was appeased by the weight and moderation of Abu Becr. "Is it "Mohammed," said he to Omar, and the mul-

Digitized by Google

titude, "or the God of Mohammed, whom you "worship? The God of Mohammed liveth for "ever; but the apostle was a mortal like our-"selves, and, according to his own prediction, "he has experienced the common fate of morta-"lity." He was interred on the same spot on which he expired; Medina has been sanctified by the death and burial of Mohammed; and the innumerable pilgrims of Mecca often turn aside from the way, to bow in voluntary devotion before the simple tomb of the prophet.

In contemplating the character of Mohammed, we behold him endowed with a pious and contemplative disposition. When marriage had raised him above the pressure of want, he avoided the paths of ambition and avarice; and, till the age of forty, he lived in innocence, and without any marked distinction. The unity of God is an idea congenial to nature and reason, and a conversation with the Jews and Christians would teach him to despise and detest the idolatry of Mecca. He felt it a duty, therefore, to warn his country of its errors. The energy of a mind incessantly bent on the same object would convert a general obligation into a particular call; the warm suggestions of the fancy would be felt as the inspirations of heaven; the labour of thought would expire in rapture and vision; and the inward sensation, the invisible monitor, would be described with the form and attributes of an angel of God. The original motives of Mohammed were probably pure, but human missionaries are seldom capable of cherishing unbelievers: in the bosom of Mohammed, the passions of pride and revenge were kindled; he sighed for the destruction of the

Digitized by Google

rebels, whom in his heart he had condemned. The injustice of Mecca, and the choice of Medina, transformed the citizen into a prince; the humble preacher into a leader of armies. In the exercise of political government, he employed even the vices of mankind as the instruments of their salvation. The use of fraud and perfidy, of cruelty and injustice, were often subservient in his hands to the propagation of the faith. Of his last years, ambition was the ruling passion; and it is possible that he, the victorious impostor, secretly smiled at the enthusiasm of his youth, and the credulity of his proselytes.

The good sense of Mohammed despised the pomp of royalty; the apostle of God submitted to the menial offices of the family: he kindled the fire, swept the floor, milked the ewes, and mended with his own hands his shoes, and woollen garment. Disdaining the penance and merit of an hermit, he observed, without vanity, the abstemious diet of an Arab and a soldier. On solemn occasions he feasted his companions with rustic hospitality; but in domestic life, many weeks would elapse, without a fire being kindled on the hearth of the prophet. The interdiction of wine was confirmed by his example; he delighted in the taste of milk and honey, but his ordinary food consisted of dates and water. Perfumes and women were the two sensual enjoyments which his nature required, and his religion did not forbid: he affirmed, that the fervour of his devotion was increased by these innocent pleasures. The heat of the climate inflames the blood of the Arabs; their incontinence was regulated by the civil and religious laws of the Koran. The licence of polygamy was reduced

Digitized by Google

to four legitimate wives or concubines; their rights of bed and dowry were equitably determined; the freedom of divorce was discouraged, adultery was condemned as a capital offence, and fornication was punished with an hundred stripes. Such were the precepts of the legislator, who himself freely indulged the appetites of a man. A special revelation dispensed him from the laws which he had imposed on the nation; he espoused fifteen or seventeen wives; eleven occupied their separate apartments at Medina, round the house of the apostle, who, by turns, enjoyed the favour of his society. They were all widows, excepting only Ayesha, the daughter of Abu Becr, whose youth and beauty gave her a superior ascendant; she was beloved and trusted by the prophet; and, after his death, the daughter of Abu Becr was long revered as the mother of the faithful. Her behaviour had been ambiguous and indiscreet: the temper of Mohammed was inclined to jealousy, but a divine revelation assured him of her innocence; he chastised her accusers, and published a law, by which no woman should be condemned unless four male witnesses had seen her in the act of adultery. The prophet has been accused, with great justice, of many atrocious acts of incontinence, from which he usually obtained full absolution, by the mouth of the angel Gabriel. While Cadijah, his first wife, was alive, his fidelity to the marriage connection was the most exemplary. During the whole twenty-four years, he abstained from the right of polygamy, and the pride or tenderness of the venerable matron was never insulted by the society of a rival. After her death, he placed her in the rank of four perfect

Digitized by Google

women, with the sister of Moses, the mother of Jesus, and Fatima, the best beloved of his daughters. "Was she not old?" said Ayesha, with the insolence of a blooming beauty, "has not God given you a better in her place?"—"No," said Mohammed, with an effusion of honest gratitude, "there never can be a better! "She believed in me, when men despised me; "she relieved my wants, when I was poor and "persecuted by the world."

Neither the virgin Ayesha, nor his ten widows, gave to the prophet any children, and of the eight which he had by Cadijah, Fatima was the only one who survived her father; she became the wife of Ali, and the mother of an illustrious progeny. The merit and misfortunes of Ali and his descendants will very properly lead, in this place, to some account of the series of the Saracen caliphs, a title which describes the commanders of the faithful, as the vicars and successors of the pretended apostle of God.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

Empire of the Arabs, under the Caliphs.

THE birth, alliance, and character of Ali might justify his claim to the vacant throne of Arabia. The son of Abu Taleb was, in his own right, the chief of the family of Hashem, and the hereditary guardian and prince of the city and temple of Mecca. He united the qualifications of a poet, a soldier, and a saint; his wisdom still breathes in a collection of religious and moral sayings. From the first hour of his mission to the last rites of his funeral, the apostle never was forsaken by a generous friend, whom he delighted to name as his brother; but the dying bed of Mohammed was besieged by the artful Ayesha, the daughter of Abu Becr, and the enemy of Ali.

The silence and death of the prophet restored the liberty of the people, and his companions convened an assembly, to deliberate on the choice of his successor. The hereditary claim and lofty spirit of Ali were offensive to an aristocracy of elders; the Koreish could never be reconciled to the proud pre-eminence of the line of Hashem; the ancient discord of the tribes was rekindled; the *fugitives* of Mecca, and the *auxiliaries* of Medina, asserted their respective merits, and the rash proposal of chusing two independent caliphs would have crushed, in their infancy, the religion and the empire of the Saracens.

Digitized by Google

The tumult was appeased by Omar, who declared himself the first subject of the mild and venerable Abu Becr; at the same time confessing from the pulpit, that if any Mussulman should hereafter presume to anticipate the suffrage of his brethren, both the elector and elected would be worthy of death. After the simple inauguration of Abu Becr, he was obeyed in Medina, Mecca, and the provinces of Arabia: the Hashemites alone declined the oath of fidelity; and their chief, in his own house, maintained, above six months, a sullen and independent reserve. The death of Fatima, and the decline of his party, subdued the indignant spirit of Ali; he condescended to salute the commander of the faithful, accepting his excuse of the necessity of preventing their common enemies, and wisely rejected his courteous offer, of abdicating the government of the Arabians. After a reign of two years, the aged caliph was summoned by the angel of death. He bequeathed the sceptre to the firm and intrepid virtue of Omar. "I "have no occasion," said the modest candidate, "for the place."—"But the place has occasion "for you," replied Abu Becr, who expired with a fervent prayer, that the God of Mohammed would ratify his choice, and direct the Mussulmen in the way of concord and obedience. The prayer was not ineffectual, since Ali himself paid every attention and respect to the superior worth and dignity of his rival, who comforted him for the loss of empire by the most flattering marks of confidence and esteem. In the twelfth year of his reign, Omar received a mortal wound from the hand of an assassin, and was succeeded by Othman, the secretary of Mo-

Digitized by Google

hammed; nor was it till after the third caliph, twenty-four years after the death of the prophet, that Ali was invested, by the popular choice, with the regal and sacerdotal office. The manners of the Arabians retained their primitive simplicity, and the son, Abu Taleb, despised the pomp and vanity of this world. At the hour of prayer he repaired to the mosque of Medina, clothed in a thin cotton gown, a coarse turban on his head, his slippers in one hand, and his bow in the other, instead of a walking-staff. The companions of the prophet, and the chiefs of the tribes, saluted their new sovereign, and gave him their right hands as a sign of fealty and allegiance.

The mischiefs that flow from the contests of ambition are usually confined to the times and countries in which they have been agitated; but the religious discord of the friends and enemies of Ali has been renewed in every age of the Hegira, and is still maintained in the immortal hatred of the Persians and Turks. The former, who are branded with the appellation of *sectaries*, maintain that if Mohammed be the apostle, his companion Ali is the vicar, of God. They bitterly execrate the three usurpers who intercepted his indefeasible right to the dignity of caliph; and the name of Omar expresses, in their tongue, the perfect accomplishment of wickedness and impiety. The *Sonnites*, who are supported by the general consent and orthodox tradition of the Mussulmen, entertain a more decent opinion. They respect the memory of Abu Becr, Omar, Othman, and Ali, the holy and legitimate successors of the prophet; but they assign the last place to the husband of

Digitized by Google

Fatima, in the persuasion that the order of succession was determined by the degrees of sanctity.

A life much devoted to contemplation had not chilled the martial activity of Ali; but, in mature age, he sometimes betrayed the rashness and indiscretion of youth. He neglected to secure the allegiance of Telha and Zobeir, two of the most powerful Arabian chiefs. They escaped from Medina to Mecca, and from thence to Bassora, erected the standard of revolt, and usurped the government of Assyria, which they had vainly solicited as the reward of their services. They were accompanied by Ayesha, the widow of the prophet, who cherished an implacable hatred against the husband and posterity of Fatima. The most reasonable Mussulmen were scandalized, that the mother of the faithful should expose her person and character in the camp; but the superstitious crowd was confident that her presence would sanctify and assure the success of their cause. At the head of nearly thirty thousand loyal Arabs, and valiant auxiliaries, the caliphs encountered and defeated the superior numbers of the rebels, under the walls of Bassora. Their leaders, Telha and Zobeir, were slain in the first battle that stained with civil blood the arms of the Mussulmen. After passing through the ranks, to animate the troops, Ayesha had chosen her post amidst the dangers of the field. In the heat of battle, seventy men, who held the bridle of her camel, were successively killed or wounded, and the cage or litter in which she sat was stuck with javelins and darts, like the quills of a porcupine. After this victory, which was styled the day of the camel,

Digitized by Google

Ali marched against a more formidable adversary, Moawiyah, the son of Abu Sophian, who had assumed the title of caliph, and whose claim was supported by the forces of Syria and the interest of the house of Ommiyah. From the passage of Thapsacus, the plain Siffin extends along the western bank of the Euphrates. On this spacious and level theatre, the two competitors waged a desultory war of one hundred and ten days. In the course of ninety actions, the loss of Ali was estimated at twenty-five, that of Moawiyah at forty-five, thousand soldiers. In this sanguinary contest, the lawful caliph displayed a superior character of valour and humanity. He generously proposed to save the blood of the Mohammedans by single combat; but his trembling rival declined the challenge, as a sentence of inevitable death. The ranks of the Syrians were broken by the charge of the hero, and as often as he smote a rebel, he shouted the Allah Acbar, "God is victorious;" and in the tumult of a nocturnal battle, he was heard to repeat four hundred times that tremendous exclamation. The prince of Damascus already meditated his flight, but the certainty of victory was snatched from the grasp of Ali, by the disobedience and enthusiasm of his troops. Their conscience was awed by the solemn appeal to the Koran, which Moawiyah exposed on the foremost lances; and Ali was compelled to yield to a disgraceful truce, and an insidious compromise. He retreated with sorrow and disgrace to Cufa; his party was discouraged; the distant provinces of Persia, Yemen, and Egypt, were subdued or seduced by his crafty rival. In the temple of Mecca three enthusiasts

Digitized by Google

discoursed of the disorders of the church and state; they soon agreed that the deaths of Ali, Moawiyah, and Amrou, the viceroy of Egypt, would restore the peace and unity of religion. Each of the assassins chose his victim, poisoned his dagger, devoted his life, and secretly repaired to the scene of action. The first mistook the person of Amrou, and stabbed the deputy who occupied his seat; the prince of Damascus was dangerously hurt by the second; and the lawful monarch received a mortal wound from the hand of the third. He expired in the sixty-third year of his age, and recommended to his children, that they would dispatch the murderer by a single stroke. The sepulchre of Ali was concealed from the tyrants of the house of Ommiyah; but, in the fourth age of the Hegira, a tomb, a temple, and a city arose near the ruins of Cufa. Many thousands of the Shiites repose in holy ground, at the feet of the vicar of God; and the desert is enlivened by the numerous and annual visits of the Persians, who esteem their devotion not less meritorious than the pilgrimage of Mecca.

In the reign of Moawiyah, the persecutors of Mohammed usurped the inheritance of his children, and the champions of idolatry became the heads of his religion and empire. The opposition of Abu Sophian had been fierce and obstinate; his conversion was tardy and reluctant; his new faith was fortified by necessity and interest; he served, he fought, and perhaps believed; and the sins of the time of his ignorance were expiated by the recent merits of the family of Ommiyah. Moawiyah, the son of Abu Sophian, was dignified, in his early youth, with the

Digitized by Google

title of secretary to the prophet; by Omar he was entrusted with the government of Syria, over which he presided forty years. Without renouncing the fame of valour, he affected the reputation of humanity: a grateful people was attached to their benefactor, and the victorious Moslems were enriched with the spoils of Cyprus and Rhodes. The sacred duty of pursuing the assassins of Othman was the engine and pretence of his ambition. The bloody shirt of the martyr was exposed in the mosque of Damascus, and sixty thousand Syrians were engaged in his service, by an oath of fidelity and revenge. Amrou, the conqueror of Egypt, was saluted the new monarch; the policy of Moawiyah eluded the valour of his rival, and, after the death of Ali, he negociated the abdication of his son Hassan, who retired to an humble cell near the tomb of his grandfather. The aspiring wishes of the caliph were finally crowned by the important change of an elective, to an hereditary kingdom. Four citizens of Medina only refused the oath of fidelity; but the designs of Moawiyah were conducted with vigour and address, and his son Yezid, a feeble and dissolute youth, was proclaimed the commander of the faithful, and the successor of the apostle of God.

A familiar story is related of the benevolence of one of the sons of Ali. In serving at table, a slave had inadvertently dropt a dish of scalding broth on his master; the heedless wretch fell prostrate to deprecate his punishment, and repeated a verse in the Koran;—"Paradise is "for those who command their anger:"—"I "am not angry:"—"and for those who pardon "offences:"—"I pardon your offence:"—"and

Digitized by Google

"for those who return good for evil :"—"I give you your liberty and four hundred pieces of silver." With an equal measure of piety, Hosein, the younger brother of Hassan, inherited a remnant of his father's spirit, and served with honour against the Christians, at the siege of Constantinople. The primogeniture of the line of Hashem, and the holy character of the grandson of the apostle, had centered in his person ; and he was at liberty to prosecute his claim against Yezid, the tyrant of Damascus, whose vices he despised, and whose title he never designed to acknowledge. A list was secretly transmitted from Cufa to Medina, of one hundred and forty thousand Mohammedans, who professed their attachment to his cause, and who were eager to draw their swords, so soon as he should appear on the banks of the Euphrates. Against the advice of his wisest friends, he resolved to trust his person and family in the hands of a perfidious people. Hosein, in a conference with the chief of the enemy, proposed the option of three honourable conditions : that he should be allowed to return to Medina, or be stationed in the frontier garrison against the Turks, or safely conducted to the presence of Yezid. But the commands of the lieutenant were absolute, and Hosein learnt that he must either submit as a captive, and as criminal to the commander of the faithful, or expect the consequences of a rebellion. "Do you think," replied he, "to terrify me with death ?" And, during the short respite of a night, he prepared to encounter his fate. He checked the lamentations of his sister Fatima, who deplored the impending ruin of his house. "Our trust,"

Digitized by Google

said Hosein, "is in God alone. All things, "both in heaven and earth, must perish and re- "turn to their creator. My brother, my father, "my mother, were better than I; and every "Mussulman has an example in the prophet." He pressed his friends to consult their safety by flight; they unanimously refused to desert or survive their master, and their courage was fortified by a fervent prayer, and the assurance of paradise. On the morning of the fatal day he mounted on horseback, with his sword drawn in one hand, and the Koran in the other; his generous martyrs consisted only of thirty-two horse and forty foot: but their flanks and rear were secured by the tent ropes, and by a deep trench, which they had filled with lighted faggots. The enemy advanced with reluctance; and one of their chiefs deserted, with thirty followers, in order to claim the partnership of inevitable death. In every close onset, or single combat, the despair of the Fatimites was invincible; but the surrounding multitudes galled them from a distance with a cloud of arrows, and the horses and men were successively slain: a truce was allowed on both sides for the hour of prayer; and the battle at length expired, by the death of the last of the companions of Hosein. Alone, weary, and wounded, he seated himself at the door of his tent. As he was tasting a drop of water, he was pierced in the mouth with a dart, and his son and nephew, two beautiful youths, were killed in his arms. He lifted his hands to heaven, they were full of blood, and he uttered a funeral prayer both for the living and the dead. In a transport of despair his sister issued from the tent, and adjured the general of the Cassians

Digitized by Google

that he would not suffer Hosein to be murdered before his eyes; a tear trickled down his venerable beard, and the boldest of his soldiers fell back on every side, as the dying hero threw himself among them. The remorseless Shamer, a name detested by the faithful, reproached their cowardice; and the grandson of Mohammed was slain with three-and-thirty strokes of lances and swords. After they had trampled on his body, they carried his head to the castle of Cufa, and the inhuman Obeidallah struck him on the mouth with a cane. "Alas!" exclaimed an aged Mussulman, "on these lips have I seen the lips of the apostle of God!" In a distant age and climate the tragic scene of the death of Hosein will awaken the sympathy of the cold reader. On the annual festival of his martyrdom, in the devout pilgrimage to his sepulchre, his Persian votaries abandon their souls to the religious frenzy of sorrow and indignation.

When the sisters and children of Ali were brought in chains to the throne of Damascus, the caliph was advised to extirpate the enmity of a popular and hostile race, whom he had injured beyond the hope of reconciliation. Yezid preferred the counsels of mercy, and the mourning family was dismissed, to mingle their tears with their kindred of Medina. The glory of martyrdom superseded the rights of primogeniture, and the twelve IMANS, or pontiffs of the Persian creed, are Ali, Hosein, and the lineal descendants of Hosein, to the ninth generation. Without arms, or treasures, or subjects, they successively enjoyed the veneration of the people, and provoked the jealousy of the reigning caliphs; their tombs at Mecca, or Medina,

Digitized by Google

are still visited by the devotion of their sect. Their names were often the pretence of sedition and civil war; but these royal saints despised the pomp of the world, submitted to the will of God, and the injustice of man, and devoted their innocent lives to the study and practice of religion. The twelfth and last of the Imans, conspicuous by the title of *Mahadi*, or the guide, surpassed the solitude and sanctity of his predecessors. He concealed himself in a cavern near Bagdad; and, the time and place of his death being unknown, his votaries pretend that he still lives, and will appear before the day of judgment, and overthrow the tyranny of Dejal, or the Anti-christ.* In the lapse of two or three centuries, the posterity of Abbas, the uncle of Mohammed, had multiplied to the number of thirty-three thousand: the race of Ali might be equally prolific; the meanest individual was above the first and greatest of princes; and the most eminent were supposed to excel the perfections of angels: but their adverse fortune, and the wide extent of the Mussulman empire, allowed an ample scope for every bold and artful impostor, who claimed affinity with the holy seed; the sceptre of the Almoades in Spain and Africa; of the Fatimites in Egypt and Syria; of the Sultans of Yemen; and of the Sophis of Persia, has been consecrated by this vague and ambiguous title. Under their reigns, it might be dangerous to dispute the legitimacy of their

* The name of *Antichrist* may appear ridiculous, but the Mahometans have liberally borrowed from every religion. In the royal stable of Ispahan two horses were always kept saddled; one for the Mahadi himself, the other for his lieutenant, Jesus, the son of Mary.

Digitized by Google

birth. One of the Fatimite caliphs silenced an indiscreet question by drawing his scimitar: "This," said Moez, "is my pedigree; and these," casting an handful of gold to his soldiers, "are my kindred and my children." In the various conditions of princes, or doctors, or nobles, or merchants, or beggars, a swarm of the genuine or fictitious descendants of Mohammed and Ali, is honoured with the appellation of sheiks, or sheriffs, or emirs. In the Ottoman empire, they are distinguished by a green turban; receive a stipend from the treasury; are judged only by their chief; and, however debased by fortune and character, still assert the proud pre-eminence of their birth. A family of three hundred persons, the pure and orthodox branch of the caliph Hassan, is preserved, without taint or suspicion, in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and still retains, after the revolutions of twelve centuries, the custody of the temple, and the sovereignty of their native land. The fame and merit of Mohammed would ennoble a plebeian race, and the ancient blood of the Koreish transcends the recent majesty of the kings of the earth.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. III.

Of the Mohammedan Religion.

BEFORE we put an end to this part of our history, we must give some account of the religion which Mohammed founded, and of the peculiar sentiments which he established. The creed of Mohammed is free from suspicion or ambiguity, and the Koran is a full testimony to the unity of God. The prophet of Mecca rejected the worship of idols and men, of stars and planets. In the Author of the universe, his rational enthusiasm confessed and adored an infinite and eternal Being, without form or place, without equal or similitude, present to our most secret thoughts, existing by the necessity of his own nature, and deriving from himself all moral and intellectual perfection. These sublime truths are firmly held by his disciples, and defined with great precision by the interpreters of the Koran. The first principle of reason and revelation was confirmed by the voice of Mohammed; his proselytes, from India to Morocco, are distinguished by the name of *Unitarians*, and the danger of idolatry has been prevented by the interdiction of images. The doctrine of eternal decrees and absolute predestination is strictly embraced by the Mohammedans.

The God of Nature has written his existence on all his works, and his law in the heart of man. To restore the knowledge of the one, and the practice of the other, has been the real or

Digitized by Google

pretended aim of the prophets of every age: the liberality of Mohammed allowed to his predecessors the same credit which he claimed for himself; and the chain of inspiration was prolonged from the fall of Adam to the promulgation of the Koran. The authority and station of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, and Mohammed, rise in just gradations above each other; but whosoever hates or rejects any one of the prophets, is numbered with the infidels. The miraculous history of Moses is consecrated and embellished in the Koran. For the divine Author of Christianity, the Mohammedans are taught by the prophet to entertain an high and mysterious reverence; yet Jesus was a mere mortal, and, at the day of judgment, his testimony will serve to condemn both the Jews, who reject his pretensions to the character of a prophet, and the Christians, who pay him religious worship. The malice of his enemies aspersed his reputation, and conspired against his life; but their intention was only guilty, a phantom or a criminal was substituted on the cross, and the innocent saint was translated to the seventh heaven. During six hundred years the gospel was the way of truth and salvation, but the Christians forgot the laws and example of their founder. The piety of Moses, and of Christ, rejoiced in the assurance of a future prophet, more illustrious than themselves; the evangelic promise of the Holy Spirit was prefigured in the name, and accomplished in the person, of Mohammed, the greatest and last of the apostles of God.

With respect to the Koran, the prophet was content with the simple character of an editor: according to himself and his disciples, that work

Digitized by Google

is uncreated and eternal, inscribed with a pen of light on the table of his everlasting decrees. A paper copy, in a volume of silk and gems, was brought down to the lowest heaven by the angel Gabriel. Instead of a perpetual and perfect measure of the divine will, the fragments of the Koran were produced at the discretion of Mohammed; each revelation is suited to the emergencies of his policy or passions. The word of God, and of the apostle, was diligently recorded by his disciples on palm-leaves, and the shoulder-bones of mutton; and the pages, without order or connection, were cast into a domestic chest, in the custody of one of his wives. Two years after the death of Mohammed, the sacred volume was collected, and published, by his friend and successor, Abu Becr: the work was revised by the caliph Othman, in the thirtieth year of the Hegira. In the spirit of enthusiasm, or vanity, the prophet rests the truth of his mission on the merit of his book, and audaciously challenges both men and angels to imitate the beauties of a single page; and presumes to assert, that God alone could dictate this incomparable performance. This argument is most powerfully addressed to a devout Arabian, whose ignorance is incapable of comparing the productions of human genius. The harmony and copiousness of style will not, in a version, reach the European infidel. The divine attributes exalt the fancy of the Arabian missionary; but his loftiest strains must yield to the sublime simplicity of the book of Job, composed in a remote age, in the same country, and the same language. At the end of two hundred years, the *Sonna*, or oral law, was fixed and consecrated by

Digitized by Google

the labours of Al Bochari, who discriminated the genuine traditions from those of a more doubtful or spurious character. Each day the pious author prayed in the temple of Mecca; the pages were successively deposited on the pulpit, and the sepulchre of the apostle, and the work, has been approved by the four orthodox sects of the Sonnites.

The mission of Moses and of Jesus had been confirmed by many splendid prodigies; and Mohammed was repeatedly urged, by the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina, to produce similar evidence of his divine legation. As often as he was pressed by the demands of the Koreish, he involved himself in the obscure boast of vision and prophecy, appealing to the internal proofs of his doctrine, and shielding himself behind the providence of God, who refused signs and wonders that would depreciate the merit of faith, and aggravate the guilt of infidelity. The votaries of Mohammed are more fully assured than himself of his miraculous gifts, and their confidence and credulity increase, as they are farther removed from the time and place of his spiritual exploits. They believe, or affirm, that trees went forth to meet him; that he was saluted by stones; that water gushed from his fingers; that he fed the hungry, cured the sick, and raised the dead; that a beam groaned to him; that a camel complained to him; that a shoulder of mutton informed him of its being poisoned; and that both animate and inanimate nature were equally subject to the apostle of God.

The precepts of Mohammed inculcate simple and rational piety: prayer, fasting, and alms,

Digitized by Google

are the religious duties of a Mussulman; and he is encouraged to hope, that prayer will carry him half way to God; fasting will bring him to the door of his palace; and alms will gain him admittance. At first his disciples were enjoined to the performance of fifty prayers every day. By the advice of Moses he applied for an alleviation of that intolerable burthen: the number was gradually reduced to five; at day-break, at noon, in the afternoon, in the evening, and at the first watch of the night. Cleanliness is the key of prayer: the frequent lustration of the hands, the face, and the body, is solemnly enjoined by the Koran; and a permission is formally granted to supply with sand the scarcity of water. The words and attitudes of supplication, as it is performed either sitting or standing, or prostrate on the ground, are prescribed by custom or authority; but the prayer is poured forth in short and fervent ejaculations. Among the priests, who reject the use of images, it has been found necessary to restrain the wanderings of fancy, by directing the thought to a *kebla*, or visible point of the horizon. The prophet was, at first, inclined to gratify the Jews by the choice of Jerusalem, but he finally determined upon the temple of Mecca, to which the Mohammedans turn their eyes five times every day; their prayers are offered indifferently, in their chamber or in the street. Friday is the day in each week which is set apart for public worship. The Mohammedan religion is destitute of priesthood or sacrifice, and the spirit of fanaticism looks down with contempt on the ministers and slaves of superstition. The voluntary penance of ascetics was odious to a prophet, who cen-

Digitized by Google

sured in his companions a rash vow of abstaining from flesh, and women, and sleep: he allowed no monks in his religion: yet he instituted a fast of thirty days in every year, during which, from the rising to the setting of the sun, on each day, the Mussulman abstains from eating and drinking, and women, and baths, and perfumes; from all nourishment that can restore his strength; from all pleasure that can gratify his senses. The use of wine is completely interdicted. The charity of the Mohammedans descends to the animal creation; and the Koran inculcates, as an indispensable duty, the relief of the indigent and unfortunate; the Mussulman must bestow a tenth of his revenue in acts of benevolence; and, if his conscience accuse him of fraud or extortion, the tenth is enlarged to a fifth. Benevolence is the foundation of justice, since we are forbid to injure those whom we are bound to assist. A prophet may reveal the secrets of heaven, and of futurity, but in his moral precepts he can only repeat the lessons of our own hearts.

The articles of faith, and practical duties of Islam, are guarded by rewards and punishments; the expectation of the Mussulman is devoutly fixed on the event of the judgment and the last day. On the omnipotence of the Creator, Mohammed and his followers rely, whose word can reanimate the breathless clay, and collect the innumerable atoms that no longer retain their form or substance. The reunion of the soul and body will be followed by the final judgment of mankind. The doom of the infidels is common; the measure of their guilt and punishment is determined by the degree of evidence which

Digitized by Google

they have rejected, and by the magnitude of the errors which they have entertained. The eternal mansions of the Christians, Jews, and idolaters, are sunk below each other in the abyss, and the lowest hell is reserved for the faithless hypocrites, who have assumed the mask of religion. After the greater part of mankind has been condemned for their opinions, the true believers will be judged by their actions. The good and evil of each Mussulman will be accurately weighed in a real or allegorical balance, and a singular mode of compensation will be allowed for the payment of injuries: the aggressor will refund an equivalent of his own good actions, for the benefit of the person whom he has wronged; and, if he should be destitute of any moral property, the weight of his sins will be loaded with an adequate share of the demerits of the sufferer. According as the shares of guilt or virtue shall preponderate, the sentence will be pronounced, and all, without distinction, will pass over the sharp and perilous bridge of the abyss; but the innocent, treading in the footsteps of Mohammed, will gloriously enter the gates of Paradise, while the guilty will fall into the first and mildest of the seven hells. The term of expiation will vary from nine hundred to seven thousand years; but all the disciples of the true faith shall be saved from eternal damnation. Seventy-two Houris, or black-eyed girls, of resplendent beauty, blooming youth, virgin purity, and exquisite sensibility, will be created for the meanest believer; a moment of pleasure will be prolonged to a thousand years, and his faculties will be increased an hundred fold, to render him worthy of his felicity. Nevertheless, the joys

Digitized by Google

of the Mohammedan paradise will not be confined to the indulgence of luxury and appetite: and the prophet has expressly declared, that all meaner happiness will be forgotten and despised by the saints and martyrs, who shall be admitted to the beatitude of the divine vision.

Such are the leading traits of the Koran: the talents of the prophet are entitled to our applause, and his success attracts our admiration. Are we surprised that a multitude of proselytes should embrace the doctrine, and emulate the zeal of an eloquent fanatic? Does it seem incredible, that a private citizen should grasp the sword and the sceptre, subdue his native country, and erect a monarchy by his victorious arms? In the changing picture of the dynasties of the East, one hundred fortunate usurpers have arisen from a baser origin, surmounted more formidable obtacles, and filled a larger scope of empire and conquest. Mohammed was alike instructed to preach and to fight, and the union of these opposite qualities, while it enhanced his merit, contributed to his success: the operation of force and persuasion, of enthusiasm and fear, continually acted on each other, till every barrier yielded to their irresistible power. His voice invited the Arabs to freedom and victory; to arms and rapine; to the indulgence of their darling passions in this world and the other: the restraints which he imposed were requisite to establish the credit of the prophet, and to exercise the obedience of the people; and the only obstacle to his success was his rational creed of the unity and perfections of the Deity. But it is not so much the propagation, as the permanency of his religion, that excites and commands our admiration: the same strong

Digitized by Google

and perfect impression which he engraved at Mecca and Medina is preserved, after the revolution of twelve centuries, by the Indian, the African, and the Turkish proselytes of the Koran. The Turkish dome of St. Sophia, with an increase of splendour and size, represents the humble tabernacle erected at Medina by the hands of Mohammed. His disciples have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the object of their faith and devotion to a level with the senses and imagination of man. "I "believe in one God, and Mohammed, the "apostle of God," is the simple and invariable creed of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol; the honours of the prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue; and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion. From the Atlantic to the Ganges, the Koran is acknowledged as the fundamental code, not only of theology, but of civil and criminal jurisprudence; and the laws which regulate the actions and property of mankind, are guarded by the infallible and immutable sanction of the will of God. This religious servitude is attended with some practical disadvantage; the illiterate legislator has been often misled by his own prejudices, and those of his country; and the institutions of the Arabian desert may be ill-adapted to the wealth and numbers of Ispahan and Constantinople. On these occasions, the Cadhi respectfully places on his head the holy volume, and substitutes a dexterous interpretation, more apposite to the principles of equity, and the manners and policy of the times.

What influence and effect the character of

Digitized by Google

Mohammed had upon the public happiness is the last thing to be considered. The Christian and Jew allow that he assumed a false commission, to inculcate a salutary, though less perfect, doctrine than their own. As the basis of his religion, he supposed the truth of the revelations in which they believed, and the virtues and miracles of their founders. The idols of Arabia were broken before the throne of God; the blood of human victims was expiated by prayer, and fasting, and alms; and his rewards and punishments of a future state, were painted by the images most congenial to an ignorant race of people. He recommended the practice of the social virtues, and checked, by his laws and precepts, the thirst of revenge, and the oppression of widows and orphans. The hostile tribes were united in faith and obedience, and the valour which had been idly spent in domestic quarrels, was vigorously directed against a foreign enemy. Had the impulse been less powerful, Arabia, free at home, and formidable abroad, might have flourished under a succession of her native monarchs. Her sovereignty was lost by the extent and rapidity of the conquest. The colonies of the nation were scattered over the East and West, and their blood was mingled with the blood of their converts and captives. After the reign of three caliphs, the throne was transported from Medina to the valley of Damascus and the banks of the Tigris; the holy cities were violated by impious war; Arabia was ruled by the rod of a subject, perhaps of a stranger; and the Bedoweens of the desert, awakening from their dream of dominion, resumed their old and solitary independence.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

Empire of the Arabs, under the Caliphs, continued.

WE have broken the thread of our narrative, in order to give a succinct view of the Mohammedan religion, which, on account of its long establishment and extensive progress over a great part of the habitable globe, merits the attention of the historian. We shall now resume the subject.

A. D. 684. Moawiyah II, the son of Yezid, was proclaimed caliph at Damascus the day on which his father died. This young prince was of a religious disposition, but of a very weak constitution; fearing lest, through ignorance, he should do wrong, he sought the advice of his preceptor, Omar, who told him, that if he found himself equal to the duties of the arduous post, he ought to accept of the dignity offered him, but if not, he ought to decline it. Finding himself, in a short time, too weak to sustain the weight of government, he resolved to relinquish his high station. He made his abdication in due form, and the chiefs proceeding to a new election, the choice fell upon Merwan, when the late monarch made a speech to the following effect: "My grandfather, Moawiyah, deprived a man more worthy than himself of the caliphate; nor did my father merit that dignity, though he obtained it. For my own part, I am determined not to have an account to give of so weighty a charge as the government of the

Digitized by Google

Mussulmen, when I appear in the presence of God; and therefore will invest the person that shall please you best, with the authority of caliph."

Moawiyah had no sooner abdicated the government, than he shut himself up in his chamber, from whence he did not remove till he died. The interval between his abdication and death he spent in religious exercises: he was surnamed, by way of ridicule, the "Father of the Night," because the state of his health, and his natural weakness, did not allow him to appear much abroad in the day-time. The house of Ommiyah was so exasperated at his abdication, that the members of it buried alive his master, whom they supposed to have been the person that suggested that resolution: the inscription on his seal was, "the world is a *cheat*." He left no issue behind him.

All the provinces of the Moslem empire, except part of Syria, concurred, soon after the death of Yezid, to advance Zobeir to the caliphate, and he caused himself to be inaugurated at Mecca: the people of that city had first declared in his favour, and their example was immediately followed by the citizens of Medina. But the house of Ommiyah, perceiving the danger, resolved to stand upon their own defence, and proclaimed Merwan, who was at the head of them, the lawful caliph, after the death of Moawiyah II. A. D. 684. The Moslem empire was, therefore, at this time, divided into two factions, and all possible methods were employed to dispose both parties to an accommodation, but without effect. The forces on both sides, commanded by Mer-

Digitized by Google

wan and Dehak, found themselves obliged to come to a general action. The battle was fought in the plains of Damascus, and Merwan came off victorious; he was, soon after, acknowledged as sovereign, and the people every where renewed their oath of fidelity to Merwan.

Soon after his accession, Merwan advanced, at the head of a considerable army, to the frontiers of Egypt. His troops quickly possessed themselves of that country, and obliged the inhabitants to take the oath of allegiance.

In the 65th year of the Hegira the followers of Ali assembled at Cufa, in order to revenge the death of Hosein. For this purpose they sent circular letters to their friends, inviting them to contribute all in their power to the execution of so laudable a design. At the head of these was Soliman, one of Mohammed's friends, consequently a very old man, in great repute for his attachment to religion, but little endowed with military virtues. He acted as if zeal could supply the place of every other virtue. Under his command was formed a species of crusade, composed of pious Mussulmen, who crowded to his standard: their cry was vengeance for Hosein, and, like true enthusiats, they were willing to devote themselves to death in the cause. "My child," said a father to his weeping daughter, who conjured him not to leave her, "thy father abandons all, to return to God." The general himself, being impressed with these sentiments, inspired his soldiers with the same. "It is for the world to come," said he, "and not for this, that you fight; therefore, whatever may be the event of the present expedition, you may depend hereafter on eternal happiness."

Digitized by Google

Soliman conducted them to Hosein's tomb, where they poured forth the most woful lamentations, and wished they had died with him. When Soliman commanded them to march, they first threw themselves on the grave, and intreated his forgiveness. All, however, were not so zealous, some of them even withdrew, which their general perceiving, said to his faithful followers: "The Almighty does not approve that these deserters should unite themselves to us; it is for our advantage that he separates them, therefore praise him and the prophet." With this excess of confidence he led those wretched victims to battle, who were all massacred, except those whose prudence or agility assisted them in flight: this was one of the principal events of Merwan's reign, which was not of a year's continuance.

Mokhtar, one who had deserted from Soliman's standard, assembled the scattered troops, now grown wise from misfortune, and with them gained considerable success. The remainder of their former credulity he turned to his own advantage. He caused a portable throne, to which he attributed extraordinary virtues, to be paraded through the camp, and carried on a mule in the rear of his army. "This throne," said he to his troops, "will be as useful to you as the ark of the covenant was to the Israelites." At first they were successful, and considered themselves indebted for victory to this pageant, which they worshipped as an idol; but its virtues soon ceased, and a total reverse of fortune ensued: their general was slain, and his troops dispersed. From this time wandering hordes were formed, destitute of every principle, and loudly expressing their

Digitized by Google

contempt of all government, both temporal and spiritual: massacre and plunder were their religion and their law. One of them, meeting a lady of great beauty, seemed inclined to spare her—"What!" said his associates, "art thou vanquished by her charms? thou deniest thy faith," and instantly struck off his head with a sabre. Abdalmalec rose superior to his rivals, and succeeded his father, Merwan.

A. D. 684.

In the sixty-ninth of the Hegira, he marched against Zobeir, and appointed Amru governor of Damascus, who, during his absence, seized the government for himself, which obliged the caliph to lay aside his intended expedition. When Abdalmalec arrived at Damascus, several skirmishes happened between his troops and Amru's men, but, by the intervention of the women, a treaty was concluded, and the public tranquillity restored. However, the caliph ordered his competitor to be disarmed, fettered, and his fore-teeth beat out. He then went to evening prayers, and left the execution of Amru to his brother, who refused to be the instrument of his death. The caliph returned, and, finding, to his great surprise, that Amru was still alive, ordered him instantly to be slain. Yahya, Amru's brother, armed a thousand slaves, and attacked the caliph's palace; they forced open the gates, killed several of the guards, and were upon the point of entering, when the people within threw Amru's head among them. This so cooled their ardour, that they desisted from the attempt, and some money having been distributed among them, they retired to their respective habitations. Their ringleader, Yahya,

Digitized by Google

was condemned to die, which punishment was, however, commuted for a month's imprisonment.

Abdalmalec having now occasion for all his forces to reduce Zobeir, in Arabia, and Musab, his brother, in Irak, to obedience, was not able to march against the Greeks, who made an incursion into Syria, but agreed to pay the Greek emperor a certain sum, to induce him to withdraw his troops from the Moslem territories.

Abdalmalec, being resolved to undertake an expedition against Musab, put to death Amru's principal accomplices. Musab, having received intelligence of the caliph's design, prepared himself for the event. In the mean time Abdalmalec sent letters full of promises to Musab's leading men, and, among the rest, to Ibrahim, Musab's lieutenant, who delivered it to his master himself, declaring that he should persist in his fidelity, and advised him to behead all those whom he had reason to suspect to be in Abdalmalec's interest; but Musab not approving of this expedient, Ibrahim pressed him to put them under an arrest till his own fate was determined; so that if he should be defeated by Abdalmalec, their heads might be cut off upon the first arrival of the bad news; but if he obtained a victory, he might make a compliment of them to their tribes. As for Abdalmalec, his subjects endeavoured to prevail upon him not to expose his person to the hazards of war, but to carry it on by means of his generals, fearing lest their affairs should be embroiled, if any disaster should happen, as their government was not yet settled upon a solid foundation: but the Syrian caliph, thinking himself a better match for Musab than

Digitized by Google

any of his generals, led his forces into the field. The two armies came in sight of each other at Masken. The troops of Irak, according to custom, resolved to desert Musab, rather than expose their country to the ravages of a Syrian army. Musab, being pressed on all sides, endeavoured to prevail upon his son to make his escape to Mecca, and acquaint his uncle, Abdallah, with the perfidy of Irak; but he refused to desert his father at that perilous conjuncture, declaring that he would not survive him. On the contrary, he advised him to retreat first to Basra, and afterwards to Mecca, but Musab would not hear of the proposal; he would not even accept of quarter offered him by the caliph, but determined to die on the field of battle. His son, therefore, who was resolved not to forsake him, and he, rushing into the midst of the enemy, fought like men animated by despair; and, after having destroyed several Syrians with their own hands, were both laid dead upon the spot. Musab's head was carried to the caliph, who offered the bearer a large reward, which he refused, saying, that as he had slain Musab to gratify his own private resentment, he had no title to it. After the battle of Masken, Cufa opened its gates to the Syrian caliph. Irak submitted, and the people of the provinces came in crowds to render him their allegiance. After the conclusion of that ceremony, he ordered vast sums of money to be distributed among them, and gave a splendid entertainment to his new subjects, to which even the meanest were admitted.

As Abdalmalec sat at table, the head of Musab was brought him. One of the guests, see-

Digitized by Google

ing the head in this same place, said, "Here have I seen Hosein's head presented to Obeidallah; Obeidallah's to Mokhtai; Mokhtai's to Musab; and now Musab's to you." Abdalmalec caused the castle to be immediately demolished, lest his own should also be carried thither. At the caliph's repast sat an old man, whose conversation may give an idea of the simplicity of that period: "What dish do you prefer?" said the prince to him. "An ass's head well seasoned and roasted," replied the veteran: "that is but an ordinary dish," said the caliph, "what say you to a leg or a shoulder of a sucking lamb, well roasted and covered with butter and milk." Thus we see that but little variation had taken place in the dishes and cookery of these countries, where Abraham, seventeen hundred years before, had offered the angels, as a delicacy, a roasted calf, with sauce made of milk and butter.

It has been remarked, that, after Hosein's death, Abdallah had assumed the dignity of caliph, which he might have preserved, had he consented to reside at Damascus; but he chose to confine himself to Arabia; his forces were very inconsiderable, compared with those of his opponent, Abdalmalec, who united the armies of Syria, and of other parts of the empire subject to his controul. With these numerous battalions, all commanded by brave generals, the Syrian obliged his rival to retreat from post to post, till, at length, Mecca was the only place remaining to him.

Here he valiantly defended himself during eight months. At length he was deserted by almost all his friends, ten thousand of the inha-

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

…, harangued
…former insur-
…ot pardon one
…After a pause,
… audience, he
…ds do I behold
…nities of tur-
… Hejaj was at-
…ers capable of

… murder of Oth-
… his fury, both
… Basrans a taste
… of them, who
… rebel, to be be-
… conduct so ex-
…at they formed
…, having defeat-
…d beheaded their

…he Hegira, Salch
…ainst the caliph.
…rimage at Mecca,
…malec was there,
…inst him. The
…l Hejaj to seize
…glance, and made
… secure a month
…most proper mea-
…ry his design into
…he Kharijites that
… name of Safrians,
…irst time, in arms.
…n to devotion, and
…el and Mesopota-

Digitized by Google

bitants, and even by his two sons. The general of the enemy offered him any terms, upon the condition only of his resigning his pretension, and acknowledging the caliph of Damascus. Although he was then seventy-two years of age, his mother, the daughter of Abu Becr, was yet alive, whom he consulted on the occasion; but she, not enduring the thought of seeing her son reduced to a private station, exhorted him not to survive the loss of his dignity. In the last visit he paid her, she observed he wore a coat of mail which she advised him to take off, that his death might not be lingering. He expressed some fears lest his body should be exposed to the enemy's insults; to which she replied, "a dead sheep does not feel when it is flayed." After bidding his mother a last farewell, Abdallah rushed into the middle of the besiegers, and slew a great number of them, but at length received himself a mortal blow. By his death, Abdalmalec remained sole caliph, which dignity he possessed thirteen years. Previously to Abdallah's last action, Abdalmalec had offered him, if he would submit, the whole public revenues of Khorasan for seven years. This proposal so incensed that commander, that he forced the caliph's messenger to eat the letter that he had brought.

Abdalmalec had a general named Hejaj, to whom he gave the government of Irak; the inhabitants of which had formerly deserted Hosein, and had not proved more faithful to Abdallah. On Hejaj's arrival at Cufa, their capital, they crowded round him:—"Your curiosity," said he, "shall soon be gratified, you shall know me before it is long;" he then as-

Digitized by Google

cended the pulpit of the mosque, harangued them in very severe terms on their former insurrections, and swore that he would not pardon one that should be guilty in future. After a pause, casting his fiery eyes round on the audience, he exclaimed, what numbers of heads do I behold ready to be struck off! what quantities of turbans and beards bathed in blood! Hejaj was attended by twelve thousand soldiers capable of putting his threats into execution.

Those who had any hand in the murder of Othman were the principal objects of his fury, both at Cufa and Basra. To give the Basrans a taste of his discipline, he caused one of them, who had been informed against as a rebel, to be beheaded on the spot. In short, his conduct so exasperated the people of Irak, that they formed an insurrection against him; but, having defeated them in a pitched battle, and beheaded their leaders, he returned to Basra.

In the seventy-sixth year of the Hegira, Saleh and Shebib took up arms against the caliph. They had both been on a pilgrimage at Mecca, the preceding year, when Abdalmalec was there, and formed a conspiracy against him. The caliph, apprised of this, ordered Hejaj to seize them, but they eluded his vigilance, and made their escape. Saleh remained secure a month at Cufa, and concerted the most proper measures with his friends to carry his design into execution. That branch of the Kharijites that followed him, went under the name of Safrians, and appeared now, for the first time, in arms. Saleh was a man much given to devotion, and had many followers in Mawsel and Mesopota-

Digitized by Google

mia, to whom he frequently read and expounded the Koran.

Once, while he was haranguing his followers, in order to inspire them with sentiments of abhorrence, both of the caliph and Hejaj, he received a letter from Shebib, complaining of his negligence. Saleh, in his answer, assured him that he was waiting only for his arrival, in order to enter upon action. This intimation rousing Shebib, he immediately joined Saleh at Daras, in Mesopotamia, of which Mohammed Ebn Merwan was at that time governor. After this junction, they seized some of Mohammed's horses, upon which they mounted their infantry. The governor, despising their numbers, ordered Adi to march against them. He advanced to Daras, where the Safrians had posted themselves, but having no inclination to fight, notwithstanding the superiority of his numbers, he gave Saleh to understand, that if he would quit Mesopotamia, and invade some other province, he would not oppose him. This proposal Saleh rejected, unless Adi would declare himself to be of the same religious and political sentiments with the Safrians, who acknowledged him their chief. To this Adi would not agree, and soon after, not being sufficiently upon his guard, he was surprised by his enemy, who attacked him while he was saying the noon prayers, defeated him, and made themselves masters of his camp. Mohammed, receiving advice of this defeat, ordered two of his generals, with three thousand men, to advance against the Separatists, who coming up with them near Amida, a fierce conflict ensued. The rebels behaved with great

Digitized by Google

bravery, and defended themselves with unparalleled intrepidity, till the approach of night put an end to the action; though, finding themselves unable to oppose the caliph's forces, they soon after retired, with great precipitation, to Mawsel, and from thence to Descara.

Hejaj, having been informed that the Safrians under the command of Saleh and Shebib had taken post to Damascus, sent Al Hareth to drive them from thence with a body of five thousand men. The two armies faced each other at a little village upon the Tigris, where they engaged; Saleh was killed on the spot, but Shebib made his retreat in good order to a neighbouring castle; from thence he made a sally upon the enemy, wounded the general himself, and dispersed the most considerable part of the army. By this victory Shebib animated his friends, and became terrible to Hejaj, who wrote to the caliph for a reinforcement, in order to enable him to extirpate the Safrians under the command of Shebib. After he had been joined by these succours, he engaged Shebib in the plains of Cufa, and entirely defeated him. Although Shebib had several times repulsed the caliph's forces, he was at last put to flight, and his horse, by accident, threw him into the river. The first time he emerged, he said, "when God decrees a thing, it is done;" and the second, "this is the decree of the Almighty;" upon which the Safrians, being struck with terror, cried out, "the emperor of the faithful is drowned." His body being drawn up with a net, they cut off his head, and sent it to Hejaj, who was greatly delighted at the sight of it.

Digitized by Google

The Mussulmen soon after invaded Africa with a very considerable force; made themselves masters of Carthage, and overran the whole country, which, in the earlier ages, was subject to that city; but they were soon expelled by John, the patrician, a man of great valour and experience, whom the emperor had sent against them. The Arabs, to repair the great losses they had sustained, equipped another fleet, and, returning to Africa, obliged John to fly to the sea-coast, where he embarked with the troops under his command for Constantinople.

In the 80th year of the Hegira, the caliph sent a general, called Mohammed, with a powerful army into Persia. About the same time, Heraclius, one of Tiberius's generals, taking advantage of the divisions that now reigned amongst the Arabs, penetrated into Syria, desolated the adjacent territory, and put to the sword about two hundred thousand of the enemy.

Hejaj built a city upon the Tigris, which he called Waset. The name signifies *the middle*, in the Arabic language, because this city stood in the midway between Basra and Cufa. About this time the nobility of Armenia drove the Arabs out of their country, and sent to Tiberius for assistance. In the mean time, Mohammed, one of the caliph's generals, entering Armenia with a powerful army, recovered that province; and, having got the authors of the revolt into his hands, burnt them all alive. Encouraged by this success, the Mussulmen invaded Cilicia, and were, to the number of ten thousand, either cut in pieces by Heraclius, or taken prisoners and sent in chains to Constantinople. In the following

Digitized by Google

year, Abdalmalec departed this life; his son Al Walid was proclaimed caliph the same day his father died. He is said to have adorned the Temple of Jerusalem with some additional buildings, soon after his accession; and to have ordered his subjects to go on a pilgrimage thither. This caliph, also rebuilt the Temple of Medina, where Mohammed and the first caliphs lay interred; it was a much more superb and magnificent structure than the former; and, in order to render it more grand, Al Walid ordered the houses destined for the habitations of the prophet's wives to be demolished. This gave great offence to the inhabitants of Medina. Walid caused a most famous mosque to be built at Damascus, to which he joined the superb church of St. John the Baptist, that had been enriched with many invaluable ornaments by the Greek emperors. Many other towns he adorned with mosques, and was the first who founded an hospital for the sick; and built caravansaries, or inns, for the traveller and the stranger. A. D. 705.

As a recompence for his services, Al Walid permitted Hejaj to settle in a small principality of Persia, where he lived as sovereign, and died peaceably at the age of fifty-five, although he had exterminated one hundred and twenty thousand people by the sword, and suffered eighty thousand to perish in prison, without reckoning the victims sacrificed in war, during twenty years that he commanded the armies, and governed the disaffected provinces with a rod of iron. Attempting once to justify his conduct, he made use of the following terms: "God has given me the power over you; and though I use it with

Digitized by Google

severity, do not flatter yourselves that when I am dead, you will escape chastisement; for God has a multitude of servants; and, after my death, he will send you one who will execute his orders respecting you, perhaps, with more rigour than I do. Would you have the prince mild and gentle, follow the dictates of justice, and obey his commands; your own conduct will be the principle and the cause of either the good or bad treatment that you receive from him. The sovereign and his lieutenant may be aptly compared to a looking-glass:—all that appears in this glass is but the reflexion and image of the objects placed before it."

Walking one day in the country, he met an Arab of the desert, and asked him "Who is this Hejaj they talk so much about? "A very wicked man," replied the Arab. "Dost thou know me?" resumed the governor. "No." "Well, I am that Hejaj, of whom thou speakest so harshly." Without betraying the smallest emotion, the Arab rejoined, "Do you know who I am?" "No." "Well, I belong to the family of Zobeir, whose descendants have a fit of insanity three days in the year, and this is one of them."

Hejaj admired the ingenious evasion, and commended the Arab's presence of mind. Having condemned some officers to suffer death, one among the number petitioned Hejaj to grant him his life, on the plea of his having some time before reproved a man for speaking ill of him. "Have you any witness?" said the governor; "I have," replied the captive immediately, naming an officer present, also under sentence of death. The latter declared it was a fact. "And

Digitized by Google

why," continued Hejaj, "did not you, as well as your comrade, prevent their defaming me?" "Because," answered this intrepid man, "you are my enemy." He extended his pardon to them both.

Once he missed his way as he was hunting, and found himself in the midst of an herd of camels, whose owner was leading them to pasture; the animals were startled, and the Arab, in a passion, asked, "What fellow is this in fine clothes come into the desert to scare my camels? May God's curse light upon him." Hejaj begged his pardon, and asked him for a little water. "Dismount," said the clown rudely, "and draw some for yourself." The governor enquired what he thought of the emperor; the Arab hesitated a moment, and then did not conceal that he thought him a very bad prince. "Why?" said Hejaj. "Because he has sent us for a governor the most wicked man upon earth." Scarcely had he spoken when the governor's guard appeared; the Arab was commanded to attend them. The following day, Hejaj invited them to dinner; the company ate and conversed. Hejaj introduced the adventures of the preceding day, when the Arab interrupted him, saying, "God prosper you in all things; but, respecting the secret of yesterday, take care you do not divulge it to-day." "I will not," replied he, "on this condition: either that thou remain in my service, or that I send thee to the emperor, informing him, at the same time, thy opinion of him." "There is a third way much preferable to either of these," returned the Arab. "What is it?" "To order me to return home, and may

Digitized by Google

we never meet again." Hejaj permitted him to depart, and made him a handsome present.

Nor must we omit another very ingenious reply made by Kumeil, whom Hejaj accused of having loaded him with the following imprecations: "May God blacken his visage; may his throat be cut and his blood shed." "It is very true," answered Kumeil: "I did say all this in the garden:—I was standing under a vine, looking at some bunches of grapes that were not yet ripe, and I wished them to turn black, that they might be cut down and made into wine." This explanation saved his life. The same good fortune did not attend his astrologer; who bluntly foretold Hejaj's death; adding some proofs to the prediction. "Well," said he, "since you are so clever, I may want your services in the other world; therefore, you shall set off before me." He sent him there in reality.

In the course of the 95th year of the Hegira, Walid banished Al Abbas from Damascus to Honein, where he begot twenty sons. The caliph also ordered him to receive seventy stripes for meditating the murder of Salit. The Arabs gained, this year, a complete victory over the Goths in Spain, which paved the way to the absolute conquest of most of the provinces of that kingdom.

Roderic being informed that the Mussulmen had landed a powerful army in Spain, and made terrible havoc in several parts of his dominions, assembled his whole force, and resolved to bring the enemy to a general action, in order to determine his fate, as well as that of his subjects. Coming up with them, he attacked them with

Digitized by Google

such bravery, that, notwithstanding the Goths had been enervated by a long peace, the victory hung in suspense for eight whole days. The king himself, dressed in his royal robes, with a golden crown upon his head, appeared, in an ivory chariot, at the head of his army, and so animated his troops, that they performed wonders; though, at length, the enemy, having received new accessions to their strength, forced them to a precipitate flight. The Arabs pursued the flying Goths with so much ardour, that the greatest part of them were killed, either in battle or the pursuit. Most of the Gothic nobility were slain; and it is not certainly known whether Roderic survived the destruction of his army. The ensigns of royalty and his horse were found in a miry place, though the enemy sought for his body in vain. The Arabs this year were likewise formidable in the eastern parts of the world.

In the next year, Al Walid's governor of Egypt died at Meer, where he had erected a large and stately mosque. Walid himself also died this year, and was buried at Damascus. He is said to have married sixty-three wives, the greatest part of whom he divorced. He expended large sums of money upon public buildings at Damascus, Jerusalem, and Medina. The inscription of his seal was "O, Al Walid, you are to die, and give an account of your actions."

Walid was succeeded by his brother Soliman, a very merciful prince, surnamed "The Key of Goodness." He redressed the grievances complained of before his accession; encouraged trade; and released all the prisoners in his extensive dominions, except such as had been confined for capital crimes. Constantinople

A. D. 715.

Digitized by Google

was attacked in his reign; and, in the space of a single year, the time which the siege lasted, thirty thousand people died of a famine, and nearly an equal number of the plague: but, on the other hand, scarcely an Arab returned home to tell the dismal tale. The same year Soliman departed this life, to the inexpressible regret of his subjects. He was mild and merciful, and a great lover of women. He died, according to some, of a pain in his side; according to others, by poison; but, with greater probability, of an indigestion, as he is said, by Arab writers, to have eaten not less than one hundred weight of meat every day.

A. D. 718. In obedience to Soliman's will, Omar II. was proclaimed caliph the day on which his predecessor died. He suppressed the solemn malediction pronounced by the caliphs of the house of Ommiyah, against the name of Ali and all his family. On this, the bigots exclaimed, "The faith is in danger; the faith is destroyed." He, nevertheless, abolished the practice, which served as a signal of schism among the Mohammedans, to perpetuate the antipathy they vowed each other. As soon as Omar was saluted caliph, the finest horses were brought him out of his predecessor's stables, all which he refused; and, mounting the horse he usually rode when a private person, he went directly to his own house, being unwilling to incommode his predecessor's family, which then resided in the palace: nor could he be prevailed upon to take possession of any of the apartments assigned him as caliph, till Soliman's domestics and relations, abashed by his superior modesty, had withdrawn themselves.

Digitized by Google

As a farther instance of this Caliph's great humility, it has been observed, that when he was visited in his last sickness by one of his generals, he was reposing himself upon a bed of palm leaves, supported by a pillow made of the skins of beasts, and covered with a common garment. His lips appeared of a livid colour, and he had on a dirty shirt. The general could not forbear blaming his sister Fatima, who was Omar's wife, for suffering the emperor of the faithful to be exhibited to any person's view in so mean and sordid a condition: but in order to justify her own conduct on this occasion, she declared that the caliph had not another shirt to put on.

In his disposition, Omar was extremely just, religious, and devout, and had fixed his mind, from his infancy, entirely upon the other world. After his death, the house to which he used frequently to retire, being then shut up, was opened: the Arabs hoping to discover a considerable treasure in it, but they were disappointed.

Yezid II. was saluted Caliph the same day that his predecessor died. Little is said of this prince, except that he built superb mosques, and was a persecutor of Christians; he even forbade a Christian to be admitted an evidence against a Mussulman. Historians assert that he commanded his subjects to exterminate white dogs, white pigeons, and, in short, all other animals of the same colour: this decree was issued A. D. 725. A. D. 720.

Yezid was much addicted to pleasure; he was passionately fond of a singing girl, named Hababah, to whom he threw a large grape at an en-

Digitized by Google

A. D. 724. tertainment, with which she, attempting to swallow it, was unfortunately choked; and he shortly after died of grief for her loss. Hesham succeeded his brother in the year of the Hegira 105. There is nothing of great importance known of this caliph; he was, however, in all things the reverse of his relation Omar II. Omar, at his death, scarcely possessed a single shirt. Hesham left ten thousand, besides seven hundred coffers filled with habiliments of every kind. During this reign, the Arabs continued their conquests. They overran the provinces of the eastern and western empires. From Africa they spread through Spain, and passed from thence into Gaul, forming a dyke against the Turks, who poured in torrents from the shores of the Caspian sea, to divide with the Arabs the rich and fertile countries they had invaded.

A. D. 743. Hesham was succeeded by Walid II. the son of Yezid, his brother, who was proclaimed caliph the day his uncle died. He had been treated with great kindness by Hesham, till he had totally abandoned himself to a most dissolute mode of life, which induced his uncle to alter the whole course of his conduct towards him. Al Walid, upon that account, retired with his friends and domestics to Azra, where he not only behaved in an irreproachable, but even an exemplary manner. At his uncle's death, he hastened to Damascus, where he soon relapsed into his former excesses, and gave himself up to all sorts of debaucheries. He distributed his uncle's treasures with a profuse hand. Hesham had locked up his provisions and apparel in chests, the keys of which he kept himself, and so

Digitized by Google

effectually concealed, that, at his death, not even a sheet could be found to wrap his body in. Walid opened all, divided these hoards among the poor of Damascus, and presented the ladies of the city with a vast quantity of perfume and magnificent dresses, which gained him the affections of the people, though his vices soon disgusted them, and general discontent ripened into sedition. He reminded them of his generosity, and his attention, in never augmenting the taxes; to which they replied, "We grant you these good qualities, but they are surpassed by your vices." He was deposed and massacred, after a reign of fifteen months.

Yezid III. the son of Walid the first, succeeded to the throne. He was surnamed, by way of derision "the son of the Diminisher," because he found himself obliged, by the emptiness of his coffers to diminish the pay that had been allowed the soldiery by the caliphs. He died of the plague six months after he ascended the throne, and his funeral service was performed by his brother Ibrahim, who succeeded him, but who was deposed after a reign of three months. A. D. 744.

Merwan II. was elected caliph, who, on account of his undaunted courage, was stiled the Warlike Ass: the asses of that country being remarkable for their unparalleled fortitude and intrepidity. A. D. 744.

The people of Hems revolted against Merwan, who opposed them at the head of a powerful army. He defeated them in a pitched battle, put a great number to the sword, and affixed to crosses erected for that purpose, the bodies of about six hundred of those who had been most

Digitized by Google

active in the rebellion. The people of Damascus, of Basra and Cufa, followed the example of the citizens of Hems, and met with the same fate.

Notwithstanding the success that Merwan had hitherto met with, in rendering all his enemy's designs abortive, the partisans of the house of Al Abbas began to grow powerful in some of the provinces of the empire. Merwan removed his treasures into his armoury, thereby shewing a distrust of the inhabitants of Damascus, which alienated the minds of the Syrians; but he continued to support himself, by the aid of his other troops. Ibrahim, one of his opponents, fell into his power; he cast him into prison, in which he died by poison. Merwan himself was at length compelled to flee into Egypt; where, having taken refuge in a mosque, he was slain at the age of sixty, and Abul Abbas, his chief opponent, was acknowledged caliph in his stead.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

Empire of the Arabs continued, under the Caliphs of the Family of Al Abbas.

WHEN Abul Abbas Al Saffah came to the throne, he exercised the most shocking cruelties upon the members of the house of Ommiyah; but, notwithstanding, one escaped, whose descendant assumed the title of Caliph in Spain. Though, on most other occasions, this caliph was considered as mild and humane, yet he shewed no pity to those whose pretensions to the throne interfered with his own. When he had freed himself from all his competitors, and was, as he thought, on the point of enjoying uninterrupted happiness, he died of the small-pox, after a reign of nearly five years. He had a tender regard for the family of Mohammed, and was reckoned a prince of pious sentiments. A. D. 749.

Upon the death of Al Saffah, his brother, Al Mansur, was proclaimed caliph. The most celebrated events of his reign are his expedition against the Turks, whom he drove out of Armenia, and the conquest of Cilicia and Cappadocia; but he lost his influence in Spain, where Abdulraahman rendered himself as famous by the magnificent edifices, as Almansar did, in Asia, by the building of Bagdad. A. D. 754.

The spot on which Bagdad stands was a fine verdant plain, and had nothing upon it but the

Digitized by Google

cell of a Christian monk, called Bagdad; and from him the new city received its name. This famous capital of the Mohammedan empire was finished in the hundred and forty-ninth year of the Hegira; it was then perfectly inclosed by a double wall, and flanked with a considerable number of towers; the caliph stiled his new metropolis "the City of Peace," either in allusion to Jerusalem, or because, at the time when it was finished, all the commotions in his empire had subsided, and almost every nation in Asia had submitted, or was become his tributary, and his subjects now enjoyed the sweets of peace, without the least interruption.

In the next year, Abu Hanifa, the founder of the first of the four sects of the Sonnites, died in prison at Bagdad, where he had been confined for refusing to be made a judge; chusing rather, as he said, to be punished by them than by God. Being asked why he declined the office, he replied, "If I speak the truth, I am unfit; but, if I tell a lie, a liar is not fit to be a judge." It is said he read over the Koran seven thousand times, while he was in prison.

Soon after Al Mansur had fixed his residence at Bagdad, a famous Christian physician was brought to court, in order to cure the caliph of a want of appetite and indigestion. The physician, attended by his pupil, being introduced to the caliph, discoursed with him both in Persic and Arabic, with the greatest fluency and elegance; assuring him, at the same time, that, with the divine assistance, he could cure him. The caliph, charmed with his manners, ordered a sumptuous and costly vesture to be put upon him, assigned him one of the best apartments in

Digitized by Google

his palace, and caused him to be treated with the greatest respect. The physician having effected a cure, Al Mansur asked him one day if he was married? He replied that he had a wife, who was extremely infirm, and not able to rise from her seat. Upon this intimation, the caliph ordered him a magnificent present, with three beautiful Greek girls, which, however, he returned without any hesitation, declaring that it was not lawful for a Christian to have more than one wife at a time. This declaration excited Al Mansur's astonishment; he dismissed him with uncommon expressions of esteem, and afterwards heaped favours upon him with great profusion.

Some time after, the physician himself was taken extremely ill, and asked the Caliph's permission to return home, to see his son and family, and to be buried with his brothers, in case it should please God to put a period to his days. Almansur desired him to embrace Mohammedism, and, in that case, promised him a certain admission into paradise after his death. To this he replied, "O emperor of the faithful, I am determined to go to the place where my ancestors reside in the other world, whether it be paradise or hell." This reply excited the caliph's laughter, who thereupon said: "But since you have been with me, I have been free from the maladies with which I was before afflicted, how, therefore, can I part with you?" The physician promised to leave behind him his pupil, and to this the caliph agreeing, dismissed his friend with a magnificent present, and sent an eunuch with him, either to conduct him to his relations, or in case of his death to convey his body to them. However, he arrived at home

Digitized by Google

safe under the eunuch's conduct. Isa, his pupil, soon after his advancement, began to grow contentious, and was in the end discharged from the caliph's service, with a severe reproof.

A. D. 774. In the 157th year of the Hegira, a famine made terrible havoc in every part of Mesopotamia, which swept away the greatest part of the inhabitants in that province, while Musa, the caliph's governor, treated the Christians with the utmost rigour and severity.

The following year Almansur set out from Bagdad, to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, but he was taken so ill on the road, that he sent for his son Al Mohdi, who attended him on his pilgrimage, to take his final leave of him. "I advise you," said he, "to conduct yourself towards your relatives in public, with the utmost attention, because it will reflect honour and fame on yourself. Increase the number of your freemen, and treat them with kindness, as they will be of great service to you, in time of adversity. Enlarge not that part of your capital erected on the eastern parts of the Tigris, as you will never be able to finish it. Never permit your women to interfere in state affairs. These are my last commands; but, alas! I believe you will not attend to them! they contain my dying wishes: and to God I recommend you." Then he took his leave of him, while they were both drowned in tears. Al Mansur continued his journey, though he grew worse and worse, till he expired in his 64th year. He was carried to Mecca, where, after an hundred graves had been dug, that his sepulchre might be concealed, he was interred.

A. D. 775. Al Mansur had made a very splendid pilgrimage to Mecca, but Al Mohdi's vi-

Digitized by Google

sit to that city was accompanied with every refinement of luxurious delicacy. The camels were loaded with snow, not only sufficient for the refreshment of the party through the burning deserts of Arabia, but to preserve the fruits he had carried with him, and to cool his liquors, during his residence at Mecca; the greater part of whose inhabitants were strangers to snow. An Arab presented him with one of Mohammed's slippers, which he graciously received. "I do not believe," said he to his courtiers, "that the prophet ever saw the slipper, but had "I refused to accept it, the people would have "thought I despised it, and have been offended." He distributed considerable sums in the temple in alms; he restored what his father had extorted from his subjects; released a great number of prisoners, and attended to the duties of his station with considerable diligence and application. Having one day, by way of reprimand, said to an officer, "How long will you be guilty of these faults?" To which the other replied, "As long as it shall please God to preserve your life for our good, so long shall we commit faults, and your clemency will pardon them."

During this reign, a man named Al Mokanna set up for a prophet; he was extremely deformed, and had lost an eye. To conceal this last defect, he constantly wore a veil, which he said was to prevent those who looked at him, from being dazzled by the splendour of his countenance. He was a juggler as well as a prophet, and, among his other tricks, he caused the appearance of a moon to rise every night from the bottom of a well, which gained him the appellation of the *moon-maker*. He attached to himself so large a

Digitized by Google

number of disciples, that Al Mohdi was at length obliged to send an army against them. Mokanna, finding himself shut up in a citadel, without hope of relief, poisoned his associates, burnt their remains, and threw himself into the fire. His proselytes, however, did not despair; for he promised that his soul should transmigrate into the body of a grey-headed old man, when he would return, and make them masters of the whole earth.

Al Mohdi persecuted with unceasing rancour all sectaries and heretics. In his reign an apothecary, named Isa, set up for a physician. One of his favourite wives, being indisposed, sent a female slave to consult him on her behalf, but without mentioning her name. The slave presented the urine, saying, it was that of a poor woman, who stood greatly in need of his assistance. "A poor woman," said he, "no, this came from an illustrious princess, who is with child of a king." The slave reported this declaration to her mistress, who sent a magnificent present to the physician, with promises of a still greater, should his prediction prove true. The princess was brought to bed of a son, when she communicated the whole affair to the caliph, who was so well pleased with it, that he sent for the physician, and heaped upon him many favours.

Al Mohdi is represented by Arab writers as a religious and devout prince; he was extremely beloved by his subjects on account of his impartial administration of justice, and the aversion he always discovered to the effusion of human blood. Being once at the mosque at Cufa, and at the point of beginning public prayers, one of

Digitized by Google

the lowest of the people said to him, "I have not yet performed the ablution, and yet I would join with you in the public prayers:" upon this the caliph stopped in the middle of the mosque, till the Arab had washed and purified himself in a proper manner. Being one day engaged in a hunting match, and pressed with hunger and thirst, he betook himself to an Arab's tent, in order to meet with some refreshment. The poor man brought out his coarse, brown bread and a pot of milk, to the caliph, and then fetched him a jug of wine. Al Mohdi, having drank a good draught, asked the Arab if he knew him? "No," said the host: "I am one of the principal noblemen of the caliph's court." He then drank a second draught, and repeated the same question, "Do you know me?"— "You have just now informed me," answered the Arab. Al Mohdi replied, "I am a much greater person than I made you believe." At a third draught he avowed himself to be the caliph; upon which the Arab carried off the pitcher, and would not suffer him to drink any more wine. Al Mohdi, surprised at his behaviour, asked him why he took away his wine? The Arab replied, "Because I am afraid that, if you take a fourth draught, you will tell me you are the prophet Mohammed; and if, by chance, a fifth, that you are God Almighty himself." This gentle rebuke so pleased the caliph, that he could not forbear laughing, and, being soon rejoined by his people, he ordered a purse of silver and a fine vest to be given to the poor man, who had entertained him in so hospitable a manner. The Arab, in a transport of joy for the good fortune he had met with, exclaimed,

Digitized by Google

"I shall henceforth take you for what you pretend to be, even though you should make yourself two or three times more considerable than you have done."

Al Mohdi's death was occasioned by a mistake; one of his wives, being jealous of his favourite, gave her a poisoned pear, which she thought worthy the caliph's acceptance, and presented it to him, without suspecting its pernicious quality. The emperor had scarcely eaten it, before he was attacked with excruciating pains, and, shortly after, expired.

A. D. 785. He was succeeded by his son Musa, who, after his father's example, persecuted the sectaries, and did not even spare those of his own family. Pilgrimages, ablutions, and prostrations, were turned by them into ridicule; for which reason the caliphs were more punctual in the observance of their several duties than before.

In the 170th year of the Hegira, Musa, finding himself firmly settled upon the throne, formed a design to exclude his brother, Al Rashid, from the succession, with a view of advancing his own son; but Yahya, a person of great reputation, and who filled the important office of visir, endeavoured to persuade him from carrying such a design into execution. The caliph pretended to be convinced by his reasoning; while, at the same time, he gave private orders to Harthamah to kill both his brother and the visir. For that purpose he kept him one night concealed in his palace, but, about midnight, Harthamah heard the voice of the caliph's mother calling him, and bidding him come and behold Musa dead upon his bed. That prince was

Digitized by Google

said to have died suddenly of a fit of coughing. He was buried near the spot in which he died, and his brother, Al Rashid, performed the funeral service over him, and succeeded to the throne.

Yahya, being informed of Musa's death, came immediately to Al Rashid to acquaint him with the news, and, before his departure, another of the caliph's friends arrived to congratulate him upon the birth of a son; so that the same night was remarkable for the death of one caliph, the accession of another, and the birth of a third. A. D. 786.

Al Rashid appointed his son, Al Amin, his successor in the empire, and, after him, settled the right of succession upon Al Mamun. The next year, the Arabs made an irruption into the territories of the Greek emperor, and defeated the Christian army sent by that prince to oppose them. Diogenes, an imperial officer of great merit and bravery, together with several other commanders, and a vast number of soldiers, perished in the action. In the following year, the caliph sent Al Hashemi into Egypt, to preside over the government of that country. About the same time, Saafar being taken extremely ill, the caliph sent his own physician to attend him, who having wrought a cure, Jaafar chose the doctor's son, Gabriel, for his own physician. Soon after, Gabriel cured the caliph's favourite Sultana, in a very singular manner. She had suddenly lost the use of her hand, and every remedy was tried to remove the infirmity, without effect. Gabriel, who was already in high repute for difficult cases, was applied to. He requested the caliph to desire the lady to attend

Digitized by Google

his levee, which being done, he approached her, and began, before the whole circuit of courtiers, to take off her clothes. This freedom threw her into such confusion, that she made a violent effort, with her whole force, to prevent him, and seized upon her garment with the part affected. Upon which, turning to the sovereign, he exclaimed, "Emperor of the faithful, she is cured!" which proved to be the case. Al Rashid was so pleased with the event, that he made Gabriel a present of five hundred pieces of money, and ever afterward honoured him with his esteem.

In the course of the 179th year of the Hegira, Al Rashid consulted all the principal doctors of the law of Bagdad, to know whether he was obliged to undertake a journey on foot to Mecca, in consequence of a vow he had formerly made. That prince being in great distress, and even almost overwhelmed with the afflictions he found himself obliged to sustain, in the reign of his brother, vowed to perform a pilgrimage to Mecca on foot, if it should please God ever to deliver him out of those troubles. However, after his own elevation to the throne, many of his courtiers remonstrated with him, assuring him that he was under no obligation to visit the Caaba in the manner he proposed; but the doctors of the law, being applied to, unanimously were of opinion, that his former vow was obligatory. He set out, therefore, from Bagdad to Mecca, went thither, and returned to his capital on foot; a pilgrimage that was never after performed in the same manner, by any future caliph. We are told, however, that the roads through which he passed were covered with rich

Digitized by Google

carpets, and a variety of stuffs of very considerable price.

In the 190th year of the Hegira, Al Rashid marched into the imperial provinces with an army of one hundred and thirty-five thousand men. He first laid siege to Heraclea, took it, and reduced it to ashes; after which conquest, he made himself master of several other towns. He then made a descent upon the island of Cyprus, the people of which he pillaged and plundered in a dreadful manner. This success so intimidated the Greek emperor, that he immediately sent a tribute, and concluded a peace with the caliph, upon the terms he thought fit to prescribe; one of which was, that the city of Heraclea should never be rebuilt. The citizens of Toledo, at this time, rebelled against the western caliph, Al Hakem, in Spain; but that prince sent his son, with an army, against their city, which they entered without the trouble and fatigue of a siege, put five thousand of them to the sword, and entirely extinguished the rebellion.

The next year, the caliph removed his lieutenant from the government of Khorasan, and placed the successor in his stead. The new lieutenant had no sooner entered upon the government of the province assigned him, than he sent his predecessor, who had exercised unheard-of tyranny, in chains, to Al Rashid. The rebel Al Leith having made a formidable progress in the conquest of Khorasan, Al Rashid resolved to march against him in person.

The general rendezvous of his forces was in the plains of Rakka, from whence he advanced at the head of them to Bagdad. Having sup-

Digitized by Google

plied his troops with every thing necessary, he continued his march to the frontiers of Jorjan, where he was seized with an illness, which grew more violent after he had entered the province. Finding himself not able to pursue his route, he resigned the command of the army to his son, Al Mamun; appointed many experienced officers to serve under him; and retired himself to Tus, in Khorasan. The caliph saw, in a dream, at Rakka, before he departed from that place, a hand over his head full of red earth, and, at the same time, he heard the voice of a person pronouncing these words: "See the earth in which Al Rashid is to be buried." He instantly asked, "where?" and was answered by the same voice, "at Tus." This warning greatly discomposing him, he communicated his dream to Gabriel, his physician, who assured him that it ought to give him no manner of concern, as dreams were but the phantoms produced by a state of uneasiness, which in this case was occasioned by his anxiety to extinguish the rebellion; he ought, therefore, to dissipate his melancholy, by pursuing some favourite diversion, that might draw his attention another way. The caliph, therefore, for this purpose, prepared a magnificent entertainment for his principal courtiers, which continued for several days; he then put himself at the head of his troops, where he was again attacked by the disorder, which increasing, at length the prediction, communicated to him in his dream, was fulfilled. Just before he died, he sent for Gabriel his physician, and said to him, "Do you remember, Gabriel, my dream at Rakka? We are now arrived at Tus,

Digitized by Google

the place, according to what was predicted in that dream, of my interment; send one of my eunuchs to fetch me a handful of earth." The eunuch soon returned, and brought a handful of red earth, which he presented to the caliph with his arm half bare; at the sight of which the dying prince exclaimed, "In truth, this is the earth, and the very arm, that I saw in my dream!" His spirits failing him, and his malady increasing, he died three days after, and was buried in the same place, where a stately monument was erected to his memory.

This caliph was a person of great humanity, and had distinguished himself by his liberality, especially to poets, being excessively fond of Arab poetry, and being even capable of writing verses himself: he was magnanimous and brave, and so devout, that he is said to have gone eight or nine times on pilgrimages to Mecca, while he was caliph. He spent a considerable time every day in prayer, except when he was sick, distributed large sums of money among the poor, and carried with him one hundred learned men to Mecca; and when he did not go himself thither, he furnished proper accommodations for that journey.

During this reign, we are told that there was a remarkable solar eclipse at Alexandria, when the stars appeared, and the people were so struck with terror, that they fell down upon their knees, and implored the divine protection.

Al Rashid, being one day told that there was a fool at Bagdad, who pretended to be God, sent for him, in order to discover whether he was really a fool or an impostor. At his first appear-

Digitized by Google

ance, the caliph said to him, a man was brought before me some days ago, who wished to pass for a prophet sent by God: I commanded him immediately to be carried to prison; he was then tried, and beheaded. The fool, having heard these words, replied, "You did right; you acted as became one of my faithful servants; that wretch never received the gift of prophecy from me, nor had he any order or mission on my part." It appears that, according to the principles of the Mohammedans, an insane person can say nothing but what is true, since it is God who speaks by him. On the contrary, he who pretends to be a prophet, when he really is not so, is an impostor, and can utter nothing but lies. The greatest part of the Moslems believe that fools are agitated by the spirit of God; hence the proverb, "Fools and children always speak the truth."

This caliph, being once in Egypt, said to his courtiers, "The king of this country formerly boasted himself to be God; in consequence, therefore, of such pride, I will confer the government of it on the meanest of my slaves."

Marching one day at the head of his troops, a woman came to Al Rashid to complain, that some of the soldiers had pillaged her house. He immediately replied, "Hast thou not read, woman, in the Koran, that princes, when they passed with their armies through places, destroyed them?"—"True," replied the woman, "but then it is also said, in the same book, that the houses of those princes shall be desolate, for the acts of injustice that they commit." This bold repartee was so well received by the caliph,

Digitized by Google

that he immediately ordered her reparation, for the damages which she had sustained.

He took for his instructor in the Mohammedan law the celebrated Doctor Asmai, who, wishing to examine things, to the utmost rigour of the law, would frequently have obliged him to make a false step, if he had not been on his guard. On such occasions the prince would say to him, "You are more learned than I, but I have more prudence than you." The doctor excelled very greatly in all kinds of Arabian literature, which so much endeared him to the caliph, that he thought it an honour to submit to his instructions; the scholar was resolved, however, to give the first lesson, which was worthy of his high rank and capacity: "Listen," says he, "to the conditions which must serve for the basis of our mutual good understanding. Never attempt to instruct me in public, nor be in haste to give me your advice in private: wait till I question you; answer in a direct and precise manner, without any superfluous words. Take care you do not endeavour to prejudice me in favour of your sentiments, nor expect me to pay too great deference to your capacity. Use no prolixity in the histories or traditions you shall think proper to relate to me. Should you observe me quitting the path of rectitude, gently lead me back to it, without any harsh expressions. Assist me in the orations I must make in public; but never address me in equivocal terms."

The caliph was succeeded by his son Al Amin, who, being extremely addicted to drunkenness and gaming, abandoned his government to his prime visir. This man A. D. 809.

Digitized by Google

was a very able minister, but, fearing Al Mamun's resentment, if, according to the succession settled by his father, he should ever ascend the Mohammedan throne, advised his master to exclude him from the succession. The caliph, unhappily for himself, followed the counsel of his prime visir, ordered Al Mamun's name to be omitted in the public prayers on Fridays, and in the discourses made afterwards to the people by the Imam, though still in his tender years, and the presumptive heir to the crown. This treatment so irritated Al Mamun, that he was resolved to come to an open rupture with his brother, in order, if possible, to frustrate his design: instead, therefore, of going to Bagdad, as he had been commanded, he cut off all communication between his province and that capital, pretending, that as his father had assigned him the lieutenancy of the Khorasan, he was responsible for all the disorders that might happen there, during his absence. He also coined money, and would not suffer Al Amin's name to be impressed upon it; he also prevailed upon a person, who had been some time in open rebellion against the caliph, to join him with a body of troops; by which means he was put in possession of all the vast territory of Khorasan. Here he bore an absolute sway, officiated in the mosque as Imam, and constantly harangued the people from the pulpit.

Al Amin, finding that he had missed his aim, and that his brother set him at defiance, declared war against him, and sent Isa to invade Khorasan with an army of sixty thousand men. Before his departure, Zebeida, Al Amin's mother, and mother-in-law to Al Mamun, intreated that

Digitized by Google

general to consider the latter as her own son, or, at least, as the son of Al Rashid; and, if he refused to obey the caliph's orders, three days after they had been imparted to him, to bring him in silver chains to Bagdad.

Al Mamun made the necessary dispositions for giving him a proper reception; he put in motion all the troops he could raise with the utmost expedition, and gave the command of them to Thaher, one of the greatest generals of the age, who obliged the caliph to retreat into his capital.

Even this sense of immediate danger did not rouse Amin from his accustomed supineness. While the enemy was at the gates of Bagdad, and the war engines were hurling their destructive weapons and fire on the devoted city, which was almost on the point of being taken by storm, he was quietly playing at chess with Kutha, his freed-man. As long as he could pass his time with this Kutha, every other concern was indifferent to him. A courier went to announce to him the defeat of the army, and death of the general; he was then amusing himself with fishing. "Do not spoil my sport," said he, "for Kutha has caught three large fishes, and I have not yet caught one." The principal inhabitants of Bagdad, not thinking themselves obliged to brave any farther dangers for such a man, agreed to capitulate, which Amin being secretly informed of, he determined to be first, and surrendered, in the hope of his life being spared; but Thaher caused him to be beheaded.

The same day that Al Amin was destroyed, the people of Bagdad unanimously proclaimed his brother caliph; A. D. 813.

Digitized by Google

he found, however, in different parts of the empire a considerable opposition, but, by means of his general Thaher, he triumphed over all his enemies, and gave to that celebrated commander, as a reward for his services, the government of Ispahan, to descend to his posterity. Though Mamun was not a founder of that city, since become the capital of Persia, he was a considerable benefactor to it; he enlarged and adorned it; and would have preferred it for his fixed residence, had not the popular prejudice been accustomed to consider Bagdad as his chief seat of empire.

He endeavoured to annihilate every pretence for schism, and even to abolish its colours. That which distinguished the Abassides was black: Mamun attempted to introduce green, the colour worn by the house of Ali. This produced dissensions that nearly ripened into sedition, and obliged the caliph to suffer the Persians to resume the black, which they have continued ever since. His desire of uniting the different sects has injured him in the opinion of rigid Mussulmen. They suspect his orthodoxy, and blame him for having introduced speculative sciences, when they say the Koran ought to suffice all true believers. It is not known whether it was to diminish the authority of that book, but he commanded the governor of Bagdad to oblige the judges and teachers of traditions to insist that it is not eternal, but created. Astronomy, physic, and all the sciences, were held in honour, during his reign. He invited men of genius to his court, loaded them with wealth, and ordered their works to be translated. He died at the age of forty-nine. When he was at the point of death, his physician, and another person, ap-

Digitized by Google

approached him, desiring him to make a confession of his faith, or to communicate his religious sentiments to the people about him; but, his speech failing him, he could only say, "O thou, who never diest, have mercy upon me, now dying!" After this ejaculation, he expired, and was carried to Iarsus, where his son and his brother buried him in the house of Khakan, one of his father's favourite eunuchs. He is said to have been the most renowned prince of the house of Al Abbas, a race more fruitful in heroes than any that ever swayed the sceptre among the Mohammedans. He lavished his favours upon the descendants, and restored to them the territory which formerly belonged to their common mother, Fatima; of which, by the tyranny of his predecessors, they had been long and unjustly deprived.

Al Motasem, according to the will of Al Rashid, was saluted caliph, the same day on which his brother, Al Mamun, died. A. D. 833. Some of the Moslem commanders at Tarsus were inclined to favour the interest of Al Abbas, son to the deceased caliph; but that young prince, having himself taken the oath of allegiance, all the officers of the army, as well as those belonging to the court, followed his example. The caliph, very shortly afterwards, received advice of the great progress made by the rebels in Persian Irak, headed by one Babec, an enemy both to civil and ecclesiastical government. This Babec was surnamed Al Horemi, it is said, because he instituted a *merry religion*, which is the signification of the word in Persian. He assumed to himself the character of a prophet, and gained a great number of devotees,

Digitized by Google

till at length he became so formidable, that Al Motasem was obliged to employ the whole forces of the empire against him. The general sent to reduce Babec, was a Turk by birth, who had been brought up a slave in the caliph's court; and, having been employed in disciplining the Turkish militia, had acquired the reputation of a great captain. As the rebels had made themselves masters of some important places, and had become very formidable, he resolved to bring them to action, as soon as an opportunity offered; which having found, he defeated them with a prodigious slaughter, putting no less than sixty thousand of them to the sword, and driving the rest into the imperial territories. He then employed much time in rebuilding and fortifying the castles that had been demolished by Babec's troops, in order thereby to put a stop to the incursions of the rebels.

About this time, a very severe persecution was carried on by the caliph, against all who denied the creation of the Koran. Hanbal, the founder of a sect of Sonnites, refusing to acknowledge the Koran to be created, was scourged in so cruel a manner, that he fainted away, having been almost flayed alive, and was afterwards imprisoned. The same punishment would have been inflicted upon another, had he not escaped it by an ingenious occasion, which was of signal service to him: he allowed the Koran to have been instituted by God, and that every such thing was created; though he would not, in direct terms, admit the conclusion naturally deducible from those premises. In short, he conceived the Koran to be endued with one of the essential properties of a created Being, though

Digitized by Google

he endeavoured to evade standing to the consequences of such a concession.

In the 227th year of the Hegira, Al Motasem died, leaving behind him eight sons, and as many daughters. It is remarkable, that he reigned eight years, eight months, and eight days; that he was elevated to the Mohammedan throne in the eighth month of the year; that he had fought eight battles, and possessed eight thousand slaves: from these, and other circumstances of the same kind, the Arabs were induced to surname him Al Mothamen, that is, the eighth. As the people of Bagdad disturbed his repose by frequent revolts, he took the resolution to abandon that city, and to build another capital. The spot he chose for this purpose was called Katul, near the city of Sara Manray, in the Arabian Irak: here he erected the new city, which he called Sa Marra. If credit be due to Arabian writers, this caliph had thirty thousand piebald horses, about whose necks he ordered sacks full of earth to be hung, which they carried to a place in the city, he had marked out for that purpose. It there formed a pretty high terrace, on which was built a large saloon, from whence he could observe every thing that passed through the city.

Historians celebrate this caliph for his magnanimity, and mention one of his actions, which appears in a very singular light. Being once separated from his companions, he met an old man standing by his ass, which had fallen down on the ground, in a dirty place, with a load on his back. The caliph immediately alighted from his own horse, to assist the man in raising up his beast; which having done, though he had spoiled his own clothes, he made him a handsome

Digitized by Google

present. He was the first of the caliphs who added the name of God to his own; for he ordered himself to be surnamed Billah in God, or by the grace of God. When the Greeks took and sacked the city of Zabatra, an Arab woman, of the house of Al Abbas, is said to have been taken prisoner by a horseman, and, the very moment she was seized, to have cried out "Succour me, O, Al Motasem!" to which the horseman replied, by way of ridicule, "See, here comes Al Motasem, on his pied horse, to your assistance." This adventure being, some time after, related to the caliph, who was then at a great distance from Zabatra, he swore that he would not think of any other enterprise, till he had released the woman. Accordingly, he marched, at the head of his forces, to that city, in the midst of winter, and attacked the Greeks with such vigour, that he entirely defeated them, and thus delivered the woman out of the hands of her enemies.

A. D. 842. Al Wathec was proclaimed caliph the same day his father died, and was also exposed to many conspiracies, which, probably, originated in the perseverance with which he pursued those who professed the eternity of the Koran. This dogma appears to have been a sort of rallying point; if the rebels would make a recantation of their belief, they obtained the caliph's pardon. He imitated, in almost all things, his uncle Al Mamun. He was extremely delighted with the study of the sciences, and greatly caressed all men of letters; he was liberal and charitable to a great degree, and so far banished poverty from his dominions, that not a single beggar was to be met with, during the last year of his reign, either at Mecca or Medina. He

Digitized by Google

was very much attached to astrology; and having, in his last illness, conferred with some of the magi, they assured him, from the present moment, his reign should be continued fifty years; but he did not live above ten days after the prediction. At his death, the prisons were full of persons of the first quality in the empire. He died, at the age of thirty-two, of the dropsy, caused, it is thought, by the stimulating potions which he had taken to incite and kindle his passions.

Al Wathec's death was no sooner known, than his brother Al Motawakkel was saluted caliph by the people of Samarra, and afterwards acknowledged as such, by all the provinces of the empire. A. D. 847.

It appears, however, that the nobles balanced some time in their choice between Al Mothadi his son, and Al Motawakkel his brother. They at length decided in favour of the latter; because the former was too young to perform in the quality of Iman the prayers in the mosque, an office which belonged exclusively to the caliph. This incapacity often inverted the order of the succession, and prevented the children from inheriting the father's throne.

Mohammed Al-Ziyat, the late visir, having treated Al Motawakkel ill, during his brother's life time, that prince resented the injuries he had then suffered, soon after he ascended the Moslem throne. He accordingly sent him to prison, and ordered a person to keep him awake for several days and nights successively. Mohammed, being afterwards suffered to take some repose, slept a whole day and a night, and when he awoke, he

Digitized by Google

was thrown into an iron furnace, heated red hot, where he was miserably burnt to death. This counsellor was endued with great eloquence; was exquisitely well versed in Arab grammar and poetry; but he was haughty, weak, vainglorious, and entirely void of compassion. He never did any person a good office, frequently saying, that pity was a natural weakness, and liberality folly.

This prince divided his empire between his three sons, who were appointed his successors. To each of them he gave a black and white banner; the former was to distinguish them as heirs-apparent to the crown; and the latter as their father's vicegerents, who had the government of the empire divided among them.

Al Motawakkel, about this time, commanded all the Christians and Jews to wear a leathern girdle, called, by the Arabs, Zonai, and a sort of badge on their cloaths, in order to distinguish them from the Mussulmen. He likewise forbade them to make use of iron stirrups, and commanded them to paint the figures of devils, or else of hogs and apes, on the doors of their houses; a disgrace which was occasioned by the imprudent conduct of the caliph's physician, a Christian, who had incurred his master's displeasure. About this time, Faraj, a famous impostor, pretending to be Moses brought to life again, performed his part so well, that several people believed him, and attended him when he was brought before the caliph. That prince having been a witness to his extravagant discourses, condemned him to receive ten blows from one of his followers, and then be to put to

Digitized by Google

death; which sentence was accordingly executed, and his disciples were imprisoned, till they recovered from their infatuation.

In the course of the next year, the caliph, who openly declared himself an enemy to the house of Ali, forbade his subjects, under the severest penalties, to go on pilgrimage to the tomb of that Imam. He afterwards ordered the sepulchre of Hosein to be entirely rased; and, in order the more effectually to efface all traces of it, he was resolved not to content himself with ploughing or breaking up the ground on which it stood, but likewise to draw a canal of water over it. At this period of Arabian history, many cities in the western provinces suffered severely from earthquakes, by which, numbers of houses were overturned. At Antioch, one thousand five hundred houses, and above ninety towers, belonging to the wall that surrounded the city, are said to have been destroyed; which calamity, together with the frightful and unaccountable noises, so terrified the inhabitants, that they fled for safety into the adjacent fields; but great multitudes of the people were destroyed by these concussions. The springs at Mecca failed this year to such a degree, that the celebrated well or fountain in that city was almost dried up. A river also, not far distant from Mount Al Akra, disappeared again the same year, in which that mountain was absorbed, and was never afterwards seen. About the same time, the caliph, being informed that the nilometer was fallen to decay, sent a geometrician from Irak to Egypt, to erect a new pillar, which being done, it was called the new nilometer; and the other that had fallen to decay, was never afterwards used.

Digitized by Google

In the 247th year of the Hegira, the caliph Al Motawakkel was assassinated, in the following manner. Although he had been some time ill, and unable to attend his duty at the mosque, he was persuaded to go thither and shew himself to the people, to prevent all commotions that might be excited by his indisposition, which, at that time, was publicly known. He therefore mounted his horse, and went directly to the mosque, where he performed the usual services. Upon his return, suspecting some secret ill designs of Al Montaser, his son, notwithstanding all his endeavours to extirpate them, he ordered him to appear, and reproached him and his mother with the cabals in which they had been engaged, and threatened to make them both feel the effects of his resentment. This rebuke so incensed Al Montaser, that he resolved upon his father's destruction, and engaged certain Turks who were dissatisfied with the caliph's conduct, and some of his domestics, to assist him in the parricide. Being stationed for that purpose, they fell upon him while he was at table, and stabbed him. During the confusion, and his efforts to defend himself, Fatah, one of his favourites, trying to save him, exclaimed, with all his might, "O Motawakkel, I will not survive thee;" while his buffoon, at a little distance, was screaming, to the full as loud, "I hope to live when you are no more." The wishes of both were gratified.

This prince is said to have been a lover of learning; but his memory must be held by the Arabs in detestation; because he was the first of their emperors who, to the pain of death, added the refinement of torture. At one time, when at table with his friends, a lion, by his order, was let loose into the apartments, to throw them into

Digitized by Google

a state of terror; at another, he would cause serpents to be flung under the table, and pots full of scorpions to be broken, without any person being permitted to change his place: and he cured, by means of an electuary, those who had been bitten or stung. The apprehension of these dangerous diversions prevented several men of science from fixing at his court, though his invitations to them were accompanied with the most liberal promises. His treatment of Honain, a Christian physician, was, of itself, sufficient to make them unwilling to attend. To convince himself whether he might confide in this person, the caliph commanded him to prepare a mortal poison for one of his enemies, so subtle in its effect, that his dissolution might appear perfectly natural. Honain rejected this proposal with horror. The emperor insisted, intreated, and confined him in prison a year. At the expiration of that period, he was again brought into the caliph's presence, who renewed his solicitations and threats. The physician continued firm. "What can inspire you with this resolution," said the emperor, "when you see death before your eyes?" "Two things," replied Honain; "my religion and my profession; the first teaches me to do good to my enemies, and to do no hurt to my friends; the second has been established for the advantage of the human race; and when I embraced it, I took a solemn oath never to be concerned in a preparation of a hurtful or mortal nature." The caliph rejoiced, and gave him his entire confidence; but a favour, bought with a year's imprisonment, was not likely to tempt the learned, whom his munificence might otherwise have attached to him. Motawakkel's reign, which

Digitized by Google

was of fourteen years duration, is remarkable for every species of scourges which desolated the empire:—wars, rebellion, famine, persecutions, dreadful hurricanes, and violent earthquakes; hence it was called the reign of prodigies.

A. D. 861. The same night on which Al Motawakkel was massacred, his son Montaser was saluted emperor. His first act was to read a declaration, affirming that he had no hand in his father's death; that it ought to be imputed to his favourite Fatah, whom he had ordered to be cut to pieces, for being guilty of so atrocious a crime. Notwithstanding, however, his professions on this head, the parricide's remorse bore evidence to his crime. He dragged on a short and hated existence, pursued by despair and the avenging furies. Soon after his elevation he thought he saw his father in a dream, who addressed him in the following words: "Mohammed, thou hast killed me! thou hast oppressed me; thou hast deprived me of the caliphate, which thou shalt in a short time leave, and then be cast into eternal fire." He immediately awaked in the utmost terror, and made his palace resound with his lamentations. He sought to annihilate every object which could remind him of this execrable deed. He demolished his father's palace, and quitted the city where the deed had been perpetrated; but he could not escape from his own thoughts; every object that he saw reminded him of his guilt. Montaser was one day admiring a beautiful painting of a man on horseback, with a diadem encircling his head, and a Persian inscription: he demanded the explanation; it was this:—"I am Shiunyeh, the son of Kosru, who mur-

Digitized by Google

dered my father, and possessed the crown only six months." He turned pale, as if struck by a sentence of death. His dreams now presented themselves to his affrighted imagination; the ghastly shade of his father seemed to stand before his eyes, calling him, with looks of terror and indignation, to the tomb. Thither he descended at the age of twenty-five. It is suspected that his end was hastened by poison, administered to him by the accomplices of his crime, who dreaded the effects of his repentance.

During this reign, an Arab, who dwelt in the neighbourhood of Mecca, held assemblies at his house for the most unlawful and indecorous purposes, in order to debauch the youth of both sexes, whom he suffered to mix together promiscuously, in direct opposition to the Mohammedan laws. This man was brought before the judge at Mecca, who, after reproaching him for his unparalleled guilt, began to draw up his process, not doubting of the truth of the fact, which was become notorious to all the people of the territory of Mecca. But as none of his accomplices would appear against him, the judge found himself greatly embarrassed, for want of evidence. However, at last, he devised an expedient which he thought would infallibly convict him; and that was, to try whether any of those public beasts, made use of by the people who set out every day from one particular place, would, of themselves, find the way to his house. The experiment was made on some asses, which went directly to the spot inhabited by the Arab, though this was, of itself, extremely difficult to be discovered. The judge having now, as he imagined, full proof of his guilt, sent for the

Digitized by Google

executioner to chastise him, who immediately appeared with his instruments of torture in his hand. The Arab, who bethought himself of a device to avoid the threatened punishment, turning to the judge, said, "When you have flayed me alive with your whips, you will have punished only one guilty person; but, by such an action, you will reflect an eternal ignominy upon the whole Arab nation; for it will be said of them hereafter, that, when the evidence of men could not be produced, they admitted that of asses." The company were so pleased with the humour of the man, that he was pardoned and dismissed.

The day after Al Montaser's death, those who had been concerned in the murder of his father assembled, and determined never to vest with the imperial dignity any of that prince's sons, lest they should be called to account for their former villainy. They, therefore, unanimously elevated to the throne Al Mostain. The friends of Al Motazz, the legal successor, assembled, and made an attempt to place him on the throne; upon this a severe conflict ensued, but Al Motazz's friends were defeated, and for the most part cut to pieces. In the course of the following year, a rebellion was excited at Bagdad by the Turkish troops, in the caliph's service. The populace assembled in great numbers, burnt one of the bridges over the Tigris, and demolished the other, opened all the prisons in that city, pillaged the houses of the wealthiest inhabitants, and distributed the money that fell into their hands among the forces posted for the defence of the frontiers, at a considerable distance from the town. But this rebellion, as well as others, at Cufa, were in the end suppressed.

A. D. 862.

Digitized by Google

Yezid, another chief of the house of Ali, rebelled against the caliph, and seized upon the province of Tabrestan, of which he remained master nineteen years; and then left it to his brother Kasem, who kept possession of it eighteen years without any molestation from the caliphs.

In the year of Hegira 251, the Turks, who had made themselves masters of all the forces of the empire, were divided into two powerful factions. Bager, one of their leaders, having had some dispute with Wasif, another of them, applied to the caliph for justice, who was so far from complying with his request, that he openly favoured his antagonist. This partiality so exasperated Bager, that he assembled his friends with a resolution to assassinate Wasif, and depose the caliph, in order to elevate another who should be more favourable to their views; but this conspiracy being discovered, Bager was arrested, which was considered as a signal for the Turks, who immediately took up arms, under the pretext of delivering their general. With the hope of putting an end to this mutiny, the caliph executed Bager, which however, so far from appeasing the Turks, rendered them more furious. In this extremity, Al Mostain fled to Bagdad. The Turks of their own authority deposed him, and placed Al Motazz on the throne. This year the Christians worsted the Mussulmen in an action by sea off Syracuse, and took four of their ships.

Al Motazz, having taken the place of their late caliph, continued to govern in his stead: when he was fixed upon the throne, without any danger of a competitor, he called his brother Al Mowaiad to the succession; though, upon bare suspicion only, he afterwards A. D. 866.

Digitized by Google

deprived him of his right, and sent him to prison. He acted in the same way with regard to Al Mouaffek, another of his brothers, who soon after fell into disgrace. The news of Al Mowaiad's confinement no sooner transpired, than the whole body of the Turkish troops began to be in motion, and publicly declared that they would release him. This commotion so excited the caliph's jealousy, that he ordered him to be murdered privately, but in such a manner, that no marks of violence could be discovered upon him; so that when the body was exposed to the view of the judges, doctors of the law, nobility and Turkish officers, they unanimously agreed, that this prince died a natural death. Ahmed, a third brother, who was greatly beloved by the people, was suffered to live in obscurity at Bagdad.

Motazz sowed dissensions among the officers, caused them to be punishers of each other, for conspiring against the power which it was their duty to protect. The chief part of the captains fell victims to the disputes he had occasioned. The emperor imagined he should be able to controul the rest by his own guard; but these were cut to pieces by the Turks, who obliged the caliph to abdicate his throne, and then starved him to death. This prince, who reigned but about three or four years, and who died at the age of twenty-two, was so attached to pleasure, that he entirely neglected the government of his extensive empire; and frequently acted beneath the dignity of his station. The patriarch Sanitius, during this reign, converted several unbelievers, who denied the reality of Christ's sufferings. The same Sanitius was at the expence of making

Digitized by Google

several subterranean aqueducts; by means of which, the city of Alexandria was plentifully supplied with excellent water.

Upon the deposition of Al Motazz, who was obliged to the Turkish troops, to declare himself unequal to the government of the Mohammedan empire, Al Mohtadi was saluted caliph; and all the people of the metropolis took the oath of allegiance to him. This prince has been represented by Mohammedan writers as a great lover of justice, which he distributed daily in person to all his subjects. He prohibited the use of wine, as well as gaming of all kinds, so expressly forbidden by the Koran; and banished from the court all singers, soothsayers, jesters, and buffoons. He sent away the lions and hounds that had been kept by his predecessors. In order to ingratiate himself with the people, he lessened the taxes; regulated the finances; inspected the conduct of the judges as well as the public accounts; and set apart two days every week for hearing and redressing the grievances of his subjects. The people were anticipating their future happiness, under the conduct of such a sovereign, when the Turkish guard, whose licentiousness he tried to restrain, conspired against him: they insolently preferred their unjust commands, to which he refused compliance: they proceeded to threats; but he remained steady in his resolution, and in consequence of it lost his life. A. D. 869.

Al Motawakkel, one of the former caliphs, had left two sons, the eldest of whom, Al Motamed, was elected to succeed Al Motadi; he was naturally indolent, ignorant of state affairs, and wholly addicted to A. D. 870.

Digitized by Google

repose and pleasure: he had, however, the good sense to place an entire confidence in his brother, who was active, vigilant, and courageous; equally capable of governing in peace and in war. To him was left the administration of all affairs, both civil and military; therefore, every action of Al Motamed's reign ought to be ascribed to Al Mowaffek. He never laid down his arms during his government.

Al Habib, prince of Zenjians, made incursions almost to the very gates of Bagdad, doing irreparable damage, wherever he moved. The caliph sent a very considerable army against him, but the Zenjian defeated him with a very great slaughter; made himself master of twenty-four of the caliph's largest ships in the bay of Basra, put an incredible number of inhabitants of Obollo to the sword, and seized upon the town, which he reduced to ashes. From thence he marched to Abadan, which likewise surrendered to him. His army being now increased to eighty thousand strong, the greatest part of the citizens of Basra abandoned the place; a circumstance which struck with terror all the inhabitants of the adjacent territories, and even the court of the caliph itself.

Al Habib continued his war with the greatest success for several succeeding years: but in the 269th year of the Hegira, Al Mowaffek attacked Al Habib with unparalleled bravery, and would have entirely defeated him, had he not been wounded in the breast by an arrow, which obliged him to retire from the heat of action. As soon, however, as he was cured of his wound, he advanced against Al Mabiya; made himself master of that metropolis; destroyed the walls that had been raised by the Zenjian prince; put many

Digitized by Google

of the inhabitants to the sword, and carried a great number away into captivity.

The next year, Al Mowaffek demolished Al Habib's palace, and seized upon his family; but the rebel and usurper, who had made such havoc in the Moslem empire himself, found means to escape. However, Al Mowaffek pursued him; entirely defeated his shattered forces, which he had rallied, and took Al Habib himself, whom he ordered to be decapitated. His head was carried upon a lance through a great part of the region, the repose of which he had so long disturbed; after which it was sent to Bagdad, where it was first exposed to public view, and then fixed upon one of the gates of the city. By this last victory, which was complete, Al Mowaffek acquired the glorious title of the Protector of Islam, or Mohammedism.

The same year died Ebn Tolun, in Egypt, who had long waged war against the caliph, and whom, two years before, Al Mowaffek had caused to be publicly cursed in all the mosques of Bagdad and Irak. It has been observed that, when Tolun was at the point of death, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and said, "O Lord, forgive thy servant, whose load of guilt is too great for him to comprehend; and shew thyself merciful to him at the time of his death." He is said to have left behind him thirty-three sons, one of whom, named Khamarawiyah, succeeded him in the dynasty he had founded. He was esteemed a strict observer of justice; charitable to the poor; and a liberal patron to men of science. He distributed every month, amongst the ecclesiastics, one thousand dinars, and spent the same sum in his kitchen, every day. It is asserted,

Digitized by Google

that, during the time he presided over Egypt, he sent to Bagdad, to be distributed among men of learning and probity, and likewise for the poor and the sick, more than two millions of dinars. He left in the treasury, at his death, immense sums of money; his servants and slaves amounted to seven thousand; his horses to the same number, besides eight thousand camels and mules, and three hundred war horses. He is reported, however, notwithstanding all his good qualities, to have been extremely cruel, and guilty of a great effusion of human blood, having either put to death or starved, at least, eighteen thousand persons.

In the 271st year of the Hegira, a sharp and bloody engagement took place between the caliph's forces, commanded by Al Mowaffek's son, and those of Khamarawiyah, who made an irruption into Syria. This battle was fought near Damascus, in which the caliph's army was completely defeated. About this period died Abdalrahman, the caliph of Spain. While he was walking in his royal gardens a little before his death, one of his guardians exclaimed, "What fine gardens are these! how beautiful is the present day, and what a delightful world would this be, if it were possible to avoid being arrested by death!" To which the caliph replied, "Thou art mistaken in thy last remark, since, had it not been for death, I should never have swayed the Mohammedan sceptre of Spain."

Al Mowaffek departed this life at Sarra Manra, and was succeeded by his son, Al Motaded, in his post of prime minister. He has been greatly celebrated by Arabian historians, who represent him as a person of magnanimity, naturally brave

Digitized by Google

and liberal. He used to say, "I always behold my friends in the same light as my brothers, and would, if it could be done with sufficient propriety, confer upon them the same appellation."

In the following year the caliph, Al Motamed, died at Bagdad; he had eaten and drank to excess the day before, which proved fatal to him. This caliph was extremely attached to his pleasures; was passionately fond of music, and not unacquainted with letters. In his reign flourished a famous astrologer, named Albumaser, who being a man of fine parts, and an excellent disposition, arrived at a great skill in astrology, and wrote several treatises upon that science, held in great esteem among the Arabs. The caliph, Al Mostain, ordered him to be severely whipped, because an unfavourable event, that he had foretold, had actually come to pass. He lived to be above one hundred years of age; has been accused of drunkenness, and was generally troubled with an epileptic disorder at the full moon.

In the reign of this caliph, there were found, in a part of Syria, seven tombs, every one of which contained a body, extremely well preserved, whose shrouds seemed quite new, and emitted a very great odour. Among these, there was one that had belonged to an old man, whose visage, and particularly the lips, appeared as fresh as those of a living person who had just drank a draught of water. Near these tombs a stone was discovered that greatly resembled one of those which are used to sharpen iron instruments upon. This stone exhibited an inscription drawn up in characters that nobody could decypher, though the caliph ordered a great number of men of all nations, sects, and reli-

Digitized by Google

gions, who lived within the limits of the Moslem empire, to be assembled for that purpose.

A. D. 892. The same day that Al Motamed died, Al Motaded, his nephew, was saluted caliph, to the prejudice of his own son. A profound tranquillity prevailed throughout the empire, immediately after his succession; so that there was great plenty of provisions, and other necessaries of all kinds in every province.

The same year Eben Tolun sent Abdallah, his ambassador, with very valuable presents to the Mohammedan court, in order to propose a match between his own daughter and Al Motaded's son Ali. But the caliph, having probably received a flattering account of the young lady's charms, demanded her in marriage for himself. To this Tolun not only gave his consent, but testified his approbation of the ambassador's conduct, in transports of joy.

About the same time, Hamdan, an Arab emir, revolted against the caliph, who raised a considerable army to reduce him. He advanced to Mawsel, at the head of his troops, and, in his march, defeated a large body of the enemy, killed a great number of them on the spot, and drove the rest into the river Zab. From Mawsel he marched to Mariden; and, having possessed himself of this fortress, ordered every thing in it, valuable, to be seized; then levelled it with the ground, and returned with his army to Bagdad. In the mean time, Hamdan retired to Hosenia, a large and extremely well fortified city, and defended by a garrison of ten thousand men, which the caliph found means to reduce, and to get Hamdan into his hands.

In the year of the Hegira 284, several won-

Digitized by Google

derful phenomena were seen in Egypt. On Holy Thursday, a highway wind arose towards the evening, which blew till midnight, when it suddenly became so dark, the night having been very light before, that not the faintest traces of any object could be discerned. This thick darkness was succeeded by a storm, which threw down a great number of houses, and did incredible damage; during this storm, a large quantity of red sand fell upon people's heads, to their great terror and astonishment; and the whole heaven seemed to be covered with pillars of fire. Towards the approach of the morning, the tempest, in some degree, abated, and the heavens appeared of a red colour, which they communicated to all terrestrial objects: this surprising redness was turned into a yellowish colour, which continued till noon, and was succeeded by a thick black cloud that continued for a day and a half; the face of the heavens was totally obscured, the cloud, all that time, absolutely intercepting the solar rays.

In the course of the year, some astrologers predicted a general inundation, occasioned by a long course of continual rains; by which the whole country, except the territory, would be laid under water. But the reverse of this prediction happened: for, in consequence of a long and uninterrupted drought, the waters of the Tigris, and other rivers, were lower than ever had been known in the memory of man; insomuch, that they frequently offered up prayers to heaven, for rain, in all the public mosques of Bagdad. The caliph, at this time, excited by his affection for Ali and his descendants, wished to have issued an order to curse publicly the

Digitized by Google

name of Moawiyer I. on account of the solemn malediction that prince had caused to be published against Ali and his family. But he was dissuaded from this step by his visir, Soliman.

During the present reign the plague made such dreadful havoc in Adherbijan, that the living were not sufficient to bury the dead; insomuch, that they were obliged to leave them exposed on the highways, in great numbers. About the same time, the Greeks made an irruption into Kaisam, ravaged it, and carried off fifteen thousand Mussulmen prisoners.

A. D. 902. Al Mothaded died at Bagdad, after he had obliged the people to take an oath in favour of his son Al Mottasi. Under Mothaded, a poor creature, named Karmeta, came from Persia into Arabia; he appeared to lead a very austere life; said he was inspired, and that God had commanded him to pray fifty times a day. When he had assembled a sufficient number of his disciples, he chose twelve as apostles, to instruct the rest, and propagate his doctrine. The governor of the province, observing the peasantry neglect their labour, threw the pretended saint into prison, declaring that he should die there. But a maid-servant in the governor's house, moved by compassion for the saint, in the dead of the night took the keys of the prison from under her master's pillow, set the prophet at liberty, and replaced the keys. The following day, when he could not be found, no doubt remained of his having been freed by a divine power; he shewed himself to some of his proselytes at a distance from the place, confirmed them in their belief, and asserted that no earthly power could hurt him: he was, how-

Digitized by Google

ever, too prudent to venture the trial, and was no more heard of. His doctrine was but little different from Mohammed's. The Karmatians increased prodigiously in a short period. Under the mask of devotion, they practised the most abominable libertinism. They afterwards formed numerous armies; laid waste many of the finest provinces in Asia; and became so formidable, that Al Motaded had need of all his forces, to drive them from the centre of his dominions.

Al Motaded was no sooner dead than Moktafi, his son, was proclaimed caliph at Bagdad. In the same year the Karmatians appeared in several parts of his dominions in armies, amounting to an hundred thousand men. One of them was commanded by Hosein, a young man, who joined artifice to valour; pretended he was descended in a direct line from Mohammed; and, in proof of his assertion, shewed a wart on his face like that on the face of a prophet. Hosein destroyed a great number of towns and villages in Syria; killed many of the caliph's subjects, carried others into captivity, and desolated the most considerable part of that fine country, with fire and sword. If the Karmatians, however, were sanguinary and cruel to their foes, they, in their turn, experienced a similar treatment. Their chiefs, among whom was Hosein, fell into the power of Al Moktafi, and, by his order, expired in excruciating tortures. The caliph's armies were also numerous, and well commanded. Egypt and Syria, which had been separated from the empire under his predecessors, were re-united to it. In despite of all his precautions, a caravan going to Mecca was, in his reign, for the first time, attacked and plundered by the Karma-

Digitized by Google

tians, who carried off an immense booty, and put about twenty thousand pilgrims to the sword. But, being surprised in the act of dividing it, they were compelled to relinquish their spoil. Zakruna, their chief, was taken prisoner in the action, and died of a contusion he had received, which hurt his brain: nevertheless, his body, attended by his wife, domestics, and a great number of Karmatian prisoners, was sent to Bagdad. Upon their arrival, the body, preceded by Zakruna's wife, was carried in triumph through the principal streets in the city, and all the prisoners were put to death.

Al Moktafi departed this life at Bagdad, after he had reigned nearly seven years; he left behind him immense riches, and a numerous army, though he could not re-annex to the empire all the provinces that had been lost by some of his predecessors; besides his land forces, he possessed fleets also. Either in person, or by his generals, he gave frequent battle to the Greeks and Turks; he rarely slept above four hours; the remainder of the night was divided between study and the affairs of government: he left the finances in an excellent state, and great armies on foot. Authors pronounce him good and humane; and that, notwithstanding the wars in which he engaged, he lamented that effusion of blood, which necessity had obliged him to cause. He was succeeded by

A. D. 908. Moktader, who was then not quite fourteen years of age, and who, on account of his tender age, was despised and imposed on. For some time the kingdom was harassed by factions, one of which placed Al Mortadi on the throne; however, he reigned only twenty-

Digitized by Google

four hours, when he made his escape into the desert; from whence he was soon drawn and destroyed. During this state of confusion, the populace committed great disorders at Bagdad, till the ringleaders were taken, and brought to condign punishment; but Ebn Hamdan, though the chief author of the revolt, was pardoned, and raised to the government of Kashah. This year there fell so great a quantity of snow in one day at Bagdad, that is was four feet deep in every part of the district of that metropolis; a phenomenon which had not been known before, in the memory of man. This was followed by a severe frost, during which the cold was so intense, that it destroyed most of the palm-trees and vegetables in the territory of Bagdad.

Al Moktader was at this time governed by his women and eunuchs.

The Mussulmen under the command of Damian, the emir of Tyre, and Leo, of Tripoli, with a fleet of three hundred ships, committed dreadful ravages on the coasts and in the islands of the Ægean Sea, and totally defeated the Greek enemy, near the island of Samos. Abu Said, the Karmatian general, made an irruption into Yamama, and took Hajr; and Al Ahsa, in this reign, was assassinated by one of his domestics, in a bath. He was succeeded in the command of the Karmatian forces by his son Said, who, immediately after his election, ordered the flesh of the assassin who murdered his father to be torn off with pincers, till he expired.

In the 303d year of the Hegira, Ebn Hamden rebelled against the king in Mesopotamia; defeated an army sent against him; took all their baggage; and even threatened the imperial city

Digitized by Google

of Bagdad: but he was at last vanquished by Munes, the eunuch, the best general Al Moktader had, who took him and his son prisoners, and conducted him, under a guard, upon a camel, with oblong caps or turbans upon their heads, and vests of hair-cloth upon their bodies, through Mawsel to Bagdad, where, immediately after their arrival, they were thrown into prison. This year the Mussulmen made an irruption into the imperial territories, under the conduct of Damian, who was killed while he was carrying on the siege of Strobelon.

The 308th year of the Hegira was rendered famous by the entire defeat of the Magrebian army in Egypt. Munes, having come to a resolution to give the enemy battle, attacked Kasem's forces with such bravery, that he overthrew them with great slaughter; he also made himself master of their baggage, as well as of all the plunder they had acquired. Next year, Al Hallaj was put to death at Bagdad; this extraordinary person has been considered in different lights by the Mohammedans; some of them having revered him as a sort of divinity, and others as a juggler and impostor. We are told that in summer he could make winter fruits appear before any number of spectators, and summer fruits in winter; that, by stretching out his hand in the air, he could make dirhems fall upon the ground, with inscriptions upon them, "there is one God;" which he called the dirhems of omnipotence; that he knew every particular transaction in private families; and that he could even penetrate into the most secret recesses of men's hearts. A persuasion of such surprising abilities could not

Digitized by Google

fail to gain him a vast number of disciples and followers among the vulgar; nor could even several doctors of the law tell what to make of him. Some writers inform us, that he could pass for several days together without food, and that when he broke his fast, he only took three mouthfuls of bread and a little water. He came from Khorasan into Irak, and from thence to Mecca, where he went to live in a cave, which was always open at top. After his return to Bagdad, he was much talked of; many pretending that the Deity resided in him, and some even asserted that he was God himself. The visir, Hamed, having been told that he had raised several people from the dead, sent for him, in order to interrogate him about his pretensions. Before him, however, he disclaimed the gift of prophecy, the working of miracles, and the residence of the Deity in him; saying, that he was possessed of no extraordinary powers, and that he worshipped God like other men. Hamed was about to dismiss him, when one of his books was produced, in which he maintained, that if a Mussulman could not go in pilgrimage to Mecca, he ought to perform all the prescribed ceremonies in a convenient room devoted to the purpose; to feed and clothe thirty orphans, and give each of them seven dirhems; and that if he acted in this manner, he would reap all the benefits and advantages accruing to Mussulmen, from a performance of the usual pilgrimage. For this benevolent and excellent scheme, worthy of the highest applause, and which will claim the approbation of all good men who shall ever hear of the name of Al Hallaj, did the doctors of the law unanimously condemn him to death;

Digitized by Google

the decision was confirmed by the caliph, and he was executed in the following most cruel manner: first, he received a thousand stripes, without even uttering a groan; then one of his hands was cut off, then one of his feet; afterwards, the other foot, then the other hand; and, lastly, the fatal stroke was given him, which put an end to his sufferings. After his execution, his body was burnt, the ashes were thrown into the Tigris, and his head was exposed to public view, in the market-place of Bagdad.

Abu Thaher intercepted a caravan of pilgrims on their return from Mecca to Bagdad, entirely defeated it, and cut to pieces the greatest part of the caliph's troops, of which it was composed. Most of the people whom he permitted to escape died of thirst and fatigue, which they were obliged to sustain in the desert. The Karmatian general, who was at this time not more than nineteen years of age, is said to have made more than two thousand prisoners, and to have acquired a booty of one million of dinars in money, together with all the rich effects and provisions of the caravan, worth at least as much more. He sent an ambassador to Bagdad, to treat with Al Moktader, which, however, was refused. About this time, an insurrection happened at Damascus, wherein the Mussulmen demolished the large and beautiful church of Saint Mary, and carried off all the sacred vessels, of almost inestimable value.

In the 315th year of the Hegira, Abu Thaher, the Karmatian general, overthrew the caliph's forces, with very great slaughter. He also possessed himself of the city of Cufa, and even threatened Bagdad: the inhabitants of which

Digitized by Google

were struck with the utmost consternation. However, Al Moktader raised a body of ten thousand horse, which he sent to act against the Karmatians; but the general who commanded them, not having been able to bring the enemy to battle, returned, after the conclusion of the campaign, to Bagdad, without having effected any thing considerable. This inactivity so animated Abu Thaher, that he advanced, at the head of his forces, to Anbar, though he soon retired, without having effected any thing against the place.

In the following year, he seized upon the town of Rahaba, and put a great number of inhabitants to the sword; and, very soon after, Al Moktader was constrained to abdicate the throne. Munes, his general, who was greatly esteemed by the army, having conceived an invincible aversion for him, entered the imperial palace, and carried away the caliph, with all his relations and children, as prisoners to his house. Al Kaher was elected in his stead; but, in the space of three days, the soldiers, repenting of their precipitation, recalled Al Moktader to the throne; he seemed to harbour no resentment against his brother, though he took the first opportunity of throwing him into prison. In his dungeon, he planned his brother's death, the circumstances of which are very remarkable. Al Moktader was a great lover of horse-racing. Al Kaher gained over an African, who was an excellent horseman, to present himself as such to his brother. He acquitted himself with so much dexterity and gracefulness, that the caliph made him recommence several times, and ordered his guard to retire some distance, that he might have

Digitized by Google

a better view of him. At this moment, the African urged his horse against the caliph, and thrusting a javelin into his breast, he instantly fell dead from his seat. The African rode off full speed towards the prison, to liberate Al Kaher. Passing through the market, he met an ass loaded with briars; his horse started, reared, and threw his rider on one of the shambles, where he remained suspended by the chin on a hook. His horse escaped from under him, and the populace, who were pursuing him, finding him in this state, took the briars from off the ass, set fire to them, and burnt the assassin. Thus was Al Moktader's murder punished, almost as soon as perpetrated. About this time, Egypt was infested with such swarms of locusts, that they darkened the air, and devoured every thing green in those parts of that fruitful country which they traversed. The same year, Abu Thaher entered Mecca with his troops, killed a great number of pilgrims in the temple, demolished the building that covered the well Zemzem, and plundered the Caaba. Among other profanations offered to that celebrated place, they took away a famous black stone, which they refused to restore, although the people of Mecca offered five thousand dinars for it. However, after they had kept it two and twenty years, they sent it back, at the same time ridiculing them, by assuring them it was not the true stone; but, as it is said, it was proved to be no counterfeit, by its peculiar quality of swimming on water. The Karmatian, however, who was sent to take away the golden spout, which carried away the water from the top of the Caaba, broke his neck in the attempt.

Before Abu Thaher advanced to Mecca, he

Digitized by Google

had several engagements with the caliph's forces; after which he stopped all the wells between Bagdad and Mecca, not permitting the caravans of pilgrims to pass between that capital and Mecca, either from Mesopotamia or Khorasan. He butchered a great number of the people, both within and without the Caaba, and also in the streets of Mecca; insomuch, that he filled with dead bodies most of the houses in the town, and the ways, vallies, and desert places, in the neighbourhood.

Al Moktader was esteemed religious, delighted in giving alms, and fasted often. He had many secretaries, governors of provinces and cities, and counsellors, or visirs. Some of the women belonging to the court had a great share in the administration, particularly a young woman named Yamek, who was so thoroughly versed in all the weightier points of the Mohammedan law, that judges, in the determination of criminal causes, and the doctors of the law, in their most important decisions, often found themselves obliged to have recourse to her assistance.

In this reign flourished Albatani, so celebrated for his accurate astronomical observations. This great mathematician and philosopher professed the Sabian religion, which chiefly prevailed at the time of his birth in the city of Harran; hence his tables are called the Sabian tables. And in the 320th year of the Hegira, died Zacarius Al Razi, a person extremely well versed in all kinds of ancient learning; though he excelled most in physic, and is styled the Phœnix of the age. In his youth he gave himself up entirely to music, but afterwards applied himself to the study of

Digitized by Google

philosophy with so much success, that he made a wonderful progress in every branch of it, and composed a great number of books upon physical and philosophical subjects. He is said to have contracted webs in his eyes, by the immoderate eating of beans; and, towards the close of his life, lost both of them by cataracts. He would not permit an oculist, who came to couch him, to perform the operation, because he could not tell of how many little coats the eye consisted; saying, at the same time, that he was not very desirous of recovering his sight, as he had already seen enough of the world to make him abhor it. He composed twelve books in alchemy, in which he asserted the possibility of a transmutation of metals; he understood astrology, or the art of predicting future events from the aspects of the celestial bodies. He was liberal, munificent, and courteous, to all men; extremely charitable to the poor; not only giving them his advice as a physician, but supplying all their wants, in the most liberal manner.

Munes wished to raise his ward, Abul Abbas, the son of Moktader, to the caliphate, but the partisans of Al Kaher prevailed. He quitted a prison for a throne: from the throne, a year after, he returned to a prison. At a future period he supported a more miserable life, though at liberty, than he had done in chains; but, unfortunately, he merited these distressing vicissitudes. As soon as he became master, Al Moktader's children, his concubines, and domestics, were ordered into his presence, and put to the torture, in order to force from them a discovery of the treasures that his predecessor had distributed among them. On the simple sus-

A. D. 932.

Digitized by Google

picion that Ahmed, the son of Mocktasi, meant to usurp the dignity, the barbarian called him into one of the inmost recesses of the palace, and had him nailed to the wall, by the hands and feet; then, being always pressed for money, he sent for Abu Yahya, a man of the robe, and very rich, and commanded him to count him down a large sum. The lawyer declared, that it was not in his power. "Ahmed," said the tyrant, who is in the next apartment, "told me you could, and he is of opinion that you should." Abu Yahya went then to explain himself: on entering the chamber, the dreadful spectacle that struck his sight filled him with fear and horror; he promised, and gave all that was demanded.

The Turkish soldiers, though unjust to several of his predecessors, whom they compelled to abdicate, performed a signal act of equity, when they hurled him from the throne. After putting out his eyes, they once more cast him into prison, where he remained twelve years. One of his successors set him at liberty; but without bestowing upon him sufficient to procure the necessaries of life. A contemporary historian has declared, that he saw him at the door of the grand mosque of Bagdad, covered with rags and filth, and stretching out his hand to the people, whom he addressed in the following terms: "Pray remember him who was once your caliph, and is now reduced to the necessity of asking you for alms." He died at the age of fifty-five, and is justly characterised as extremely rash, cruel, and avaricious.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

The Arabs, under the Caliphs of the House of Al Abbas, continued.

AFTER the deposition of Al Kaher, his nephew, Al Radi, was taken out of prison, where he had been confined, and placed upon the throne, the very day his uncle was deposed. But how much was this dignity degraded; how inconsiderable was the circle of its power, compared to its former grandeur! Arabian Irak, Persian Irak; the cities of Basra, and Cufa; Egypt, Syria, and Spain; the Mussulman provinces in Sicily and Crete: all these vast and extensive countries had passed into the possession of sovereigns, who, though they respected the caliph of Bagdad, allowed him a degree of pre-eminence rather in religious concerns than in political government. In reality, Bagdad and its environs were all that remained to the caliph; but, as if this small portion were too difficult to govern, Al Radi instituted a post superior to that of visir, which he named emir-al-omra; that is to say, commandant of commandants: this great officer, or rather prime minister, was trusted with the administration of all military affairs, and had the management of the finances; he even officiated for the caliph in the grand mosque of Bagdad, and had his name mentioned in the public service throughout the empire. In a word, Al Radi was so entirely governed by this new officer, that he could

Digitized by Google

not take out of the treasury a single dinar for his own use, without his permission.

In the 326th year of the Hegira, Ebn Moklah, who was then visir, wrote, on the part of the caliph, a letter to Yahcam, the Turk, telling him, that now it was time for him to advance to Bagdad, at the head of a body of troops, in order to deliver the caliphate from the tyranny of Ebn Rayek, and to occupy his place. But this letter having been intercepted, Ebn Rayek discovered to the caliph the reason of the visir, who had dared to write such a letter without his master's knowledge, and even against his express orders. Moklah, upon his appearing before the caliph, at first denied the fact, but the letter, in his own hand-writing, being produced, he was found guilty, and condemned by the judges to have his right hand cut off, for having committed so heinous a crime. When sentence was pronounced, he complained bitterly of the severity of it, and of the iniquity of cutting off the right hand of a man who had invented the most beautiful character that had ever been used among the Arabs, and had written several copies of the Koran in so elegant a manner, that they passed for master-pieces in the art of writing, and had been visir to three successive caliphs. Nor did he content himself with bare complaints: he inveighed bitterly against the judges and the caliph himself; wherefore, the executioner not only deprived him of his right hand, but, some days afterwards, cut out his tongue; after which, he was confined in one of the dungeons belonging to the imperial palace. Al Radi reigned dependent on the emir-al-omras, not only those of his own creating, but those who

Digitized by Google

tore their authority from his grasp. He kept this shadow of dignity almost seven years, and died at thirty. Historians describe him as possessed of goodness and humanity: he was liberal, munificent, mild, well versed in literature, eloquent, a good poet, and a great admirer of the conversation of learned men. He was the last of the caliphs who wrote verses, at least such as were worthy of having a place assigned them in the Mohammedan annals; he was the last likewise of the Mussulmen emperors that officiated constantly in the mosque; that commanded the forces; that had the disposal of the public money; and that, in short, exercised any kind of real authority over the Arabs. His successors, for a considerable period at least, enjoyed little more than the bare title of caliph, and of this they were even at last deprived by the Tartars. Henceforth, therefore, the caliphs of Bagdad will not occupy a more exalted station in history than they did in the theatre of their wonted grandeur.

When the caliph Al Radi expired, Yahcam, then emir-al-omra, was at Cufa, and, upon his receiving advice of that prince's death, he immediately dispatched one of his secretaries to Bagdad, with orders to convoke the descendants of Ali, the judges, the house of Al Abbas, and all the principal officers of the empire, to elect the new caliph. They had not been long assembled, before they chose Ibrahim, surnamed, afterwards, Al Mottaki, whom they unanimously saluted emperor. Al Mottaki, after his inauguration, sent a sumptuous vest and a banner to Yahcam, and continued him in the post of emir-al-omra; he also con-

A. D. 941.

Digitized by Google

firmed Abul Kasem in the office of visir, though he had not the least authority in the state.

Yahcam having sent a body of troops from Waset, to reduce Abu Abdallah, Al Baridi set out from that city, to take the command of these troops; but he was met upon the road by an express, which informed him that his forces had already proved superior to the enemy, and obliged Al Baridi to take himself to flight. Yahcam, therefore, directed his course towards the banks of the Taur, hunting through all the tract he traversed. He made an incursion, with a small party, into a district bordering upon that river, inhabited by a rich and numerous tribe of Curds, in order to pillage them; and, having surprised this people, who little expected such a visit, he killed several of them, and dispersed the rest. However, a young Curd, observing the barbarity and rapacity of this plunderer, whom he did not know, made directly at him, and ran him through with his lance; upon which he fell instantly to the ground, and expired. The caliph, receiving advice of what had happened to Yahcam, immediately took possession of his palace, where he found immense treasures buried under ground; all which he seized for the service of the state, and conferred the post of emir-al-omra upon Ciertakin, the Deylamite; but, not being pleased with his conduct, he soon dismissed him, and appointed, as his successor, Ebn Rayek, who came from his residence in Syria to Bagdad for that purpose. About this time so grievous a famine raged in several parts of Sicily, that many of the towns and villages of that fruitful island were entirely depopulated.

Digitized by Google

In the 332d year of the Hegira, a robber, supported by Ebn Shirazad, one of Teuzan's chief commanders, to whom he paid monthly, for his protection, fifteen thousand dinars, appeared in the neighbourhood of Bagdad, and committed, even within sight of that capital, terrible depredations. In the mean time, Al Mottaki, perceiving that Teuzan became every day more insolent, discovered an inclination to deprive his prime minister of the office he had assigned him, the preceding year; a design which so enraged the Turk, that he obliged the caliph to abandon the city of Bagdad, and retire to Al Mawsel. At length, however, he meditated a return, and wrote to Teuzan, making overtures for a reconciliation. This year the Russians, by means of a fleet they had equipped on the Caspian Sea, made an irruption into the greater Armenia, penetrated as far as the city of Bardaa, which they took and sacked, and returned, without having sustained any considerable loss. Such a scarcity of all sorts of grain prevailed for several months at Bagdad, that the inhabitants of that metropolis were terrified at the thoughts of a famine. The famous Abu Thaher died of the small-pox, in the course of this year. In the next, Al Mottaki was deposed by Teuzan, before he had been quite four years upon the throne. In answer to the caliph's letter, sent towards the close of the preceding year, the usurper assured this prince, that the proposals he had offered for an accommodation were perfectly agreeable to him, and that he would engage to perform all the articles of the future treaty demanded by the caliph; and that Al Mottaki might depend upon being received with all the honours

Digitized by Google

due to a person in his sublime station. The caliph relying upon this promise, went to join Teuzan in his camp. As soon as the emir perceived him, he quitted his horse, walked by the side of the stirrup, prostrated himself, and treated him and his family with every mark of respect and honour. He wrote at the same time to Bagdad, desiring that Al Mostacfi, the son of Mottafi should be sent to him. The scene then changed. The unfortunate Mottaki was torn from the throne, and the emir, not content with this act of injustice, added to it that of depriving him of his sight. He was then left to wander a wretched mendicant, in the tattered garb of poverty, and wooden shoes, the only covering for his feet. Eastern writers represent him as a just and religious prince, who had scarcely any thing left him, besides the bare title of caliph; the privilege of having his name impressed on the current coin; and the liberty of officiating as Imam in the public mosques. In the course of his reign, Al Mottaki sent, as a present to the Greek emperor, the handkerchief with which our Saviour is said to have wiped his face, and wherein the resemblance of his countenance was still to be seen, which had been preserved in the church of Edessa. The emperor, in consequence of this present, released a great number of Mohammedan prisoners. Al Makin relates, that our Saviour sent the handkerchief above-mentioned to Abgar, the black king of Edessa, and that, upon its arrival at Constantinople, it was conducted in great pomp by the patriarch, bishops, clergy, and Greek nobility, to the church of Santa Sophia, where it was then deposited, and for a long time afterwards remained.

Digitized by Google

While this prince filled the throne, a grievous famine visited several parts of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Irak, which was succeeded by a dreadful pestilence, that raged till the beginning of the following year. At Bagdad, in particular, the people were forced to live on bran and hay for a considerable time; and such a dreadful mortality hereupon ensued among the Mussulmen, that many of them were frequently buried in the same grave, and that without either funeral service or ablution.

About this time two sects arose, very violent antagonists, and rancorous enemies to each other. Their disputes were on an incomprehensible subject, which has afforded, from that time to the present, matter for extremely vehement disputations. The point of contest was, whether God governs all things by general or partial laws; whether predestination be absolute or relative. Al Ashari supported the former system, against Jobbais, who had been his master; and, to prove the governance of God by a general providence, he maintained the injustice of a partial providence. He proposed the argument in the following question:—"What do you think would be the fate of three brothers, one of whom lived in the observance of God's commands, the other in open defiance of them, and the third died in infancy?—Jobbais replied, "The first would be recompensed in heaven, the second punished in hell, and the third neither punished nor rewarded."—"Then," answered Al Ashari, "might not the third say, had my life been longer, my lot would have been more happy?"—"True," replied Jobbais, "but God would answer, I foresaw, that had your life been prolonged, you

Digitized by Google

would have become an object of punishment." In that case, the second might rejoin, "that he ought to have escaped punishment, by being cut off in his infancy." To obviate, therefore, this appearance of injustice and cruelty, with regard to the Creator, Al Ashari maintained, that the destiny of individuals is not fixed by the Deity, but that he abandons them to the influence of general laws.

Al Mottaki was succeeded by Al Moktafi. Upon his accession, he continued his benefactor, Teuzan, in the post of emir-al-omra, who, in consequence of this office, had the government of Bagdad, with a district belonging to it, entirely committed to his charge. Al Moktafi released his predecessor, Al Kaher, from his confinement in the imperial palace, and sent him, dressed only with a cotton shirt on his back, and wooden shoes on his feet, to the house of Ebn Thaher, that he might not be in a condition to disturb the public repose. Peace, however, was soon banished from the caliph's throne, by the intrigues of a female favourite, who had formerly been instrumental to his elevation to the Mohammedan throne, and was now not less so in his deposition; for, Moezzadawla having been apprised that she was caballing with some of the great men at court, in order to remove him from the post of emir-al-omra, he appeared at the head of a strong party in the caliph's palace, on the day appointed by that prince for granting an audience, to the ambassador of the emir of Khorasan. Moezzadawla, according to custom, took his seat close by the caliph, and prostrated himself before him; which ceremony was scarce over, when two Deylamite officers A. D. 944.

Digitized by Google

approached Al Mostacfi, who held out one of his hands to each of them to kiss: but, to his great surprise, they seized upon him, dragged him from his throne, tied his turban about his neck, and hurried him to the emir's palace, where he was immediately thrown into irons. His female favourite, who would have been the cause of this new revolution, was seized, and her tongue cut out. The caliph was deprived of his sight by the conspirators, who plundered the imperial palace.

The descendants of Al Moktadi, after two intermediate successions, once more appeared on the throne of the caliphs, in the person of Al Moti. The father was sovereign of Bagdad, and the environs. Al Moti was confined to a part of the city, and his whole administrative and diplomatic corps consisted of one secretary. Al Moti continued Moezzadawla in the office of emir-al-omra, having himself no other share of the public revenues, nor of the power and authority formerly annexed to this high station, than what that prime minister allowed him. Peace and war were, however, carried on in his name, but, though in his name, he had no casting voice. The very existence of this court depending on the pious veneration of the people, made the persons who composed it scrupulously attentive and punctual in the discharge of all the Mohammedan duties. It was also the centre of literary controversy; but the real sciences, being but poorly recompensed by caliphs, no longer opulent, under Moti, quitted Bagdad for Aleppo, where they were honourably received and protected by Abul Azan, a magnificent and generous prince. He was illustrious

A. D. 946.

Digitized by Google

for his greatness of soul, his valour, his erudition, his love of justice, and his strict observance of all religious duties. His palace was the abode of poets and philosophers, of whom none, on their departure, had cause to complain of his want of liberality or unkindness. He reigned as sovereign prince over this division of the ancient empire, which he had converted into a flourishing state: while the wretched caliph was deprived even of necessaries by the rapacity of his emir, the latter abandoned himself to pleasure and the indulgence of every extravagance, insolently depending on his master's economy as his means of supporting them. On an occasion, when the finances were insufficient to pay the arrears of the militia, he demanded the sum from the pontiff, who, in reply, urged the impossibility of satisfying his demands. "You had better acquiesce with a good grace," said the emir, "than wait till you are forced." This menace so terrified the prince, that he even sold the furniture of his palace, and remitted the money to the emir, who in a short time dissipated the whole. Al Moti filled the throne twenty-nine years, in this state of abject dependence. He abdicated it at the age of sixty-three, and died about two months after.

During his reign there was a dreadful famine at Bagdad, in which several women are said to have destroyed their children, and to have eaten them: for which inhumanity they were executed, and their bodies thrown in the Tigris. At this period, some of the principal Sicilians entered into a conspiracy against the emir of that island, but it was discovered just when it was upon the point of being carried into exe-

Digitized by Google

cution. The ringleaders were seized, and the most guilty executed; which produced public tranquillity in the Mohammedan part of the island.

An accident happened soon after, that occasioned an open rupture between Al Moezz and Abdalrahman, the caliphs of Kairwan and Andalusia. The latter having sent a vessel to Alexandria, this ship gave chace to and took another, sent from the emir of Sicily, by Al Moezz, with an ambassador and his dispatches on board; an insult which so incensed the caliph of Kairwan, that he immediately fitted out a fleet with a body of land forces on board, to make reprisals on the caliph of Andalusia's subjects. This fleet, which was re-inforced with the Sicilian squadron soon after, entered the port of Almeria, and burned all the ships riding at anchor, except the vessel which Al Hasan, the late emir of Sicily, who commanded Al Moezz's fleet, seized upon, with a number of singing girls, and a very valuable cargo on board, belonging to Abdalrahman himself, as a lawful prize. Not contented with this, Al Hasan made a descent, with the troops on board the combined fleet, on the coast of Grenada; which he ravaged in a dreadful manner, put many of the Spanish Mussulmen to the sword, and then returned safe, without having sustained any considerable loss. Abdalrahman having received advice of these hostilities and depredations, immediately equipped a strong squadron, to cruize on the coast of Africa, and if possible to land a body of troops in that country; but this squadron, having been worsted in an engagement, was obliged to return, without having effected any thing of consequence.

Digitized by Google

The king of Nubia laid siege to Aswan, a city of Al Said, in the Upper Egypt, seated on the eastern bank of the Nile, and the confines of Ethiopia. The Nubian forces meeting with no enemy to oppose them, soon made themselves masters of the place, levelled it with the ground, and carried off many of its inhabitants into captivity, putting the rest to the sword. The Egyptians receiving advice of what had happened, sent an army in pursuit of the king of Nubia, which entirely defeated him, took a great number of his men prisoners, and dispersed the rest. After this victory, they penetrated into the Nubian territories, and carried a fortress called Al Rim, by assault, with which they concluded the operations of the campaign.

In the course of the three hundred and forty-ninth year of the Hegira, a considerable number of Egyptians and Magrebians were swept away, by night time, in a certain valley, into the Red Sea, by a torrent that broke in suddenly upon them, when they were returning from Mecca, with all their baggage and camels. Two thousand villages inhabited by Turks embraced Mohammedism.

The next year is remarkable for being the first, in which the office of kadi of Bagdad was exposed for sale, and bought for the annual sum of two hundred thousand dirhems, to be paid out of the profits of it to Moezza Dawla, the emir Al Omra. Such a flagrant instance of venality was never before heard of in the Mohammedan empire; but from this period, all the principal offices of the state were disposed of at Bagdad in the same manner.

In the following year Nicephorus Phocas, the

Digitized by Google

imperial general, penetratin
territories, with an army of
laid siege to Ain-Zarba, w
surrendered. Soon after
he commanded all the inha
crier, to retire into the gr
ing to put all those to the
found in their own houses
order was obeyed by all
of it; but the next morni
great number of men,
without the mosque, who
cred. After this an ord
Greek general, requiring
sulmen confined in the m
before night, upon pain
same manner as those wh
command. In consequen
poor people quitted the m
sion and hurry, that many
and others, not knowing
perished on the road, bei
cessaries and assistance.
fail to butcher those the
found in any part of the to
abandoned the place at t
threatening to return after
solemn season.

Nicephorus, after the re
marched with an army of
sand men to Aleppo, in o
place; but though he attac
fury, he was repulsed by t
sieged in every assault. Af
a dissension, arising between
garrison, afforded the Greek

Digitized by Google

forcing open the gates and entering the town, they put great multitudes of men and women to the sword, and carried off above ten thousand children of both sexes, with an immense quantity of spoil. They then laid siege to the citadel; which, however, in a few days they were obliged to abandon. In their retreat, they offered not the least injury or violence to any of the people in the district of Aleppo, but ordered them to sow and till their ground as usual; saying that they would return the following year, and carry off the fruits of the earth. The palace called Al Daran, situated a little without the city, together with three hundred leathern bags full of silver, fourteen hundred mules, and and a great number of arms, fell into the victor's hands.

In the course of the present year, the following solemn form of malediction was drawn up by the Shiites, and inscribed upon the doors of Bagdad. "May God for ever abominate and remove from himself, Moawiyah! and him who took from Fatema's family the territory of Fadac! and him who refused Al Hasan to be buried in his grandfather Mohammed's tomb! and him who banished Abu Dahor! and him who excluded Al Abbas from the number of those who were candidates for the caliphate!" but this being defaced by some of the Sonnites, the following words only were substituted: "May God's curse fall upon Moawiyah, and all those who have treated ill the family of his apostle!"

Before the close of the year 356, Ebn El Hasan, the emir of Sicily, received an order to leave that island, and return to Africa. In obedience

Digitized by Google

to which, he, his wife, children, domestics, and all his substance, set sail as soon as he could make the proper dispositions for their departure.

The Greeks made an inroad into Syria, and penetrated into Tripoly. They took the castle of Arca by storm, from thence they advanced to Hems, which the inhabitants abandoned at their approach. They were no sooner in possession of that place, than they laid it in ashes, and then moved towards the maritime parts of the province, which they laid waste with fire and sword. After they had ravaged the country for the space of two months, and thrown down the pulpits in eighteen mosques, they retired into the imperial territories, loaded with the spoil they had acquired, in this successful expedition. In the next year, they made another irruption into Syria, carried Antioch by assault, and plundered the city, and put a great number of inhabitants to the sword. From thence they marched to Aleppo, then in no posture of defence, which the governor abandoned at their approach, and retired into the castle. Here he defended himself for some time, and at last agreed to pay the Greeks a certain annual tribute, for the due performance of which he gave up several hostages.

In the beginning of the next year, the Greeks penetrated into Mesopotamia, and ravaged Edessa and all the interjacent tract of country; the Mussulmen abandoned their habitations, and fled in great numbers to Bagdad. The cries and lamentations of those poor wretches reaching the ears of the emir Al Omra, he went immediately to the caliph, and demanded a cer-

Digitized by Google

tain sum of money, in order to drive away the enemy from the frontiers. But the caliph told him, that, being stripped of his power, authority, and wealth, he was himself almost destitute of common necessaries, and had no money to spare on the present occasion: he added, that he would rather be in the situation of a private person than that of caliph, when attended with such disagreeable circumstances. The emir, who was entirely attached to his pleasures and diversions, and was even then just returned from hunting, told him in a menacing tone, that his refusal was a mere pretext, and that it would much better become him to satisfy the demands of the soldiery with a good grace than by compulsion. This hint so terrified the caliph, that he immediately sold the furniture of his palace, though he could raise by this expedient only forty thousand dirhems, which he put into the hands of the emir, who in a short time dissipated the whole. Notwithstanding the caliph's submission, he was in a very few months driven from the throne, which he had filled in a state of the most abject dependance for twenty-nine years. The leading events of this long reign we have given in detail. It appears that Al Moti possessed the virtues of a private person; he was affable, modest, gentle, sincere, charitable, and extremely devout in all religious duties. To his son he transmitted those virtues, who resembled him in his economical propensity, but which was not of more utility to him than it had been to his father. It appeared that the caliphs amassed wealth for the emirs to lavish.

Digitized by Google

A. D. 974. As soon as Al Moti had abdicated the government, his son, Al Tay, was saluted caliph. Immediately after his inauguration he gave the sublime post of emir-al-omra to Sabektekin; and by this act he left nothing for himself but the empty title of emperor or commander of the faithful; being deprived of all power and authority in the same manner as his immediate predecessor. This year the Karmatians, notwithstanding their former defeat, made a second irruption into Egypt, where, however, they were overthrown with great slaughter, and obliged to fly the country, from whence they came. After which retreat, Al Moezz sent a large body of troops to Damascus, to keep the inhabitants of that city in awe; but notwithstanding the force, they had such an aversion from his government, that he found himself not a little embroiled and embarrassed by them: a considerable part of the city was reduced to ashes during the commotions which at this time happened. The people of Mecca and Medina, however, prayed publicly in their mosque for Al Moezz, and persisted in their fidelity to the Fatemite caliph, till at length Al Aftekin, at the head of a numerous army of Turks, advanced to Damascus, and was received with open arms by the inhabitants of that city, who immediately expelled Al Moezz, governor of that place; after which they discontinued their recognition of Moezz's authority in the mosques, on the days of divine service. That prince dying the following year, his son and successor, Al Aziz, sent Jawhar, his general, with a powerful army, into Syria, who laid siege to Damascus, which

Digitized by Google

must have fallen into his hands, had it not been relieved by a body of Karmatian troops. These in their turn pursued Jawhar, and came up with him at Askelon, where they offered him battle, which he declined, having lost a great many of his men by famine. However, he was reduced in a short time to the last extremity, and with great difficulty prevailed upon Al Aftekin to permit him, for a large sum of money, to return into Egypt. Upon his arrival at Mesr, he pursuaded Al Aziz himself to undertake an expedition against Al Aftekin, who was then in possession of the best part of Syria. That prince therefore, without delay, marched with a formidable army against the rebels, whom he overtook and entirely defeated, putting a great number of them to the sword, and making prisoners of the rest. Al Aftekin, however, found means to escape; but Al Aziz, having offered a reward of one hundred thousand dinars to any one who would deliver that general alive into his hands, an Arab, his particular friend, with whom he had taken refuge, being tempted by the largeness of the reward, brought him to the Fatemite caliph, who was so far from offering him any violence, that he made him a present of a very fine tent, as well as of several sumptuous mantles, and household furniture of almost inestimable value; released all the Turkish prisoners who had fought under him as their chief, and carried him to Mesr, where in great affluence he at last ended his days.

The Greeks, about this time, under the conduct of Zimisces, made an irruption into Syria, took Hems and Baalbec, and from the latter of those cities marched to Damascus; but Al Af-

Digitized by Google

tekin marched against them with considerable force: Zimisces turned off to Sidon, and obliged the inhabitants of that place to pay him a large sum of money; he then moved to Tripoly, and besieged that city above forty days. Here it is said poison was administered to him, which forced him to retire, in a sick and languishing state, to Antioch. But the people of that place refusing to admit him into the town, he cut down all their trees, and was returning home; but he expired before he reached Constantinople. After the departure of Zimisces, Antioch surrendered to a body of troops he left behind him to continue the siege of the city; but in a short time it returned to its former masters.

In the 365th year of the Hegira, Al Moezz, the conqueror of Syria and Egypt, departed this life, after he had sat upon the throne of Kairwan more than twenty-three years. This prince entertained a great opinion of the truth of astrology, and never undertook any enterprize of moment, without consulting those who pretended to have skill in that art. He has, however, been considered by Mohammedan writers as a learned and virtuous prince. He was particularly celebrated for his liberality and for his affection to his subjects, whom he governed with great lenity and moderation. He was succeeded by Al Aziz, before the conclusion of the year, the people of Mecca offered up their prayers publicly to heaven for the health, welfare, and prosperity of this prince.

Al Aziz's affairs in Egypt were greatly embroiled this year, notwithstanding he had made Jawhar his prime minister. Several battles were fought in the neighbourhood of Mesr, and the

Digitized by Google

Fatemite caliph himself was besieged in that capital; but at last the siege was raised, and Al Aziz proved superior to all his enemies, probably by the conduct and address of Jawhar, as well as the bravery of his troops. As black was the colour most in vogue amongst the eastern caliphs of the house of Al Abbas, so white was most esteemed by the Fatemite caliphs. This had been substituted in the room of the other amongst his subjects by Al Moezz, and was the fashionable colour through the whole course of Al Aziz's reign, as it has since been among the greatest part of the Africans and Arabs, even to this very day.

In the year 368, Al Aziz sent Jawhar with an army to drive Al Aftekin from Damascus; in pursuance of his orders he invested that city, but at the end of two months, he was obliged to desist, and raise the siege; and in a very short time afterwards, Jawhar himself was reduced to the last extremity, and obliged to submit to the humiliating conditions imposed upon him by the conqueror. Al Aziz himself then took the command of his army, defeated the enemy with great slaughter; but Al Aftekin himself escaped out of the battle; he was, however, soon after taken, and brought to Al Aziz, who carried him into Egypt, made him his hajeb, and treated him with uncommon marks of distinction. However, he was soon after poisoned, through envy, by Al Aziz's visir, who was immediately thrown into prison, and by his master's order was some time detained there. But Al Aziz, not being able to keep the machine of government in motion to his own satisfaction, without the assist-

Digitized by Google

ance of this minister, he was afterwards released, and restored to his former dignity.

Al Aziz having married a Christian lady, made Jeremiah, one of her brothers, patriarch of Jerusalem; and the other, Arsenius, patriarch of Cairo and Mesr. As the Fatemite caliph had a daughter by this lady, both she and her brothers had a considerable ascendant over him; and therefore Arsenius easily obtained a grant of the great church of the jacobites of Mesr, called afterwards the church of the patriarch. The caliph, Al Tay, commanded Adadodawla, the king of Persia's name, to be mentioned for the first time in the public prayers, and to be repeated every third Friday in the mosques of Bagdad. He also commanded drums to be beat before his palace during the time of the five prayers; none of which compliments had ever been paid to any of his predecessors. The caliph likewise dignified him with a Persian title, Shahinsha, which signifies the great king, or the king of kings; which had been formerly assumed by the ancient Persian monarchs, even before the days of Alexander the Great. Nor was any Mohammedan prince ever honoured with this lofty title before Adadodawla, to whom it was from this time constantly applied in the pulpits, and probably in other public places, of all the cities and towns within the jurisdiction of the caliph. It should be observed, that this same Adadodawla is called by some historians Chosroes, and is said to have granted three thousand Roman or Greek captives their liberty, as a recompense for the eminent services they had done him, against the rebellious Persians.

Digitized by Google

After many schemes of ambition and aggrandizement, Adadodawla died at Bagdad, being worn out by frequent attacks of epilepsy, though not forty-eight years old at the time of his death, and at last was carried off by one of those fits. By historians he is reckoned to have been a prince of great magnanimity, unparalleled dignity, having an excellent understanding, consummate prudence, great sagacity in council, and a happy dexterity in hitting upon lucky expedients on the most urgent occasions, and was extremely conversant in all the arts of government. He had also a valuable share of learning, and was an encourager of learned men. He was prosperous in his undertakings, and had a mind capable of forming the most unbounded projects. To men of virtue and probity he was liberal and munificent. But with all these good qualities, he was a prince of insatiable ambition, which frequently led him to the most unjustifiable actions. As a patron of literature, men versed in all branches of science flocked to his court, from every part of the Mohammedan world, and dedicated their compositions to him. He had a taste for poetry, and wrote good verses himself: but in one of the specimens which he left behind him, he seemed to arrogate to himself the power even of reversing the divine decrees; for which presumption he has been deservedly censured by two Arab writers, who have observed that he never was easy or happy after that production appeared. When he was at the point of death, he is reported to have said, with a faltering tongue, "What have all my riches and prosperity availed me? My power and authority are now at an end."

Digitized by Google

Which words, according to the same historians, he continued repeating till he expired. After his death, the officers of the army and the grandees of the court of Bagdad, pitched upon his son Marzaban for his successor, took the oath of allegiance to him, and gave him the surname of Samsamoddawla, scimitar of the state.

The caliph, Al Tay, confirmed all that had been done by the military and nobles on this occasion, and made the new emir-al-omra a visit, to condole with him on his father's death. Not long after his elevation to this office, Al Hamadi made himself master of Al Mawsel, and having received a farther accession of strength, he meditated the reduction of Bagdad itself. Samsamoddawla, therefore, finding his authority struck at, assembled a powerful army, marched at the head of it, and entirely defeated him. After which Al Mawsel immediately surrendered to the victor, without attempting to make any defence. At this period, Sharfodawla, the eldest of Adadodawla's sons, marched with a powerful army to Waset, which immediately surrendered to him. He was already in possession of several important cities, but before he had invaded Irak, he wrote to his brother Abul Hasan, who occupied most of the cities of Fars, (the ancient name of Persia) to join him with all the troops he could assemble; but Abul Hasan, not disposed to act against his brother Samsamoddawla, refused to enter into this war; upon which Sharfodawla marched against him at the head of all his forces, defeated, and took him prisoner. The city of Basra also submitted to him; he then sent a letter to the caliph Al Tay, insisting upon the post of emir-al-omra, and the

Digitized by Google

deposition of his brother: with which demand, the caliph, who was not able to oppose him, found himself obliged to comply. He therefore immediately dispatched the imperial mantle with the instrument, confirming him in the possession of the office he demanded, and a sum of money, which he probably wanted, in order to pay his troops. Not contented with these concessions, he required the caliph to deliver up his brother into his hands. This request was likewise granted, upon the condition that not only his life, but his property, should be secured to him. Notwithstanding the agreement by which he was bound, he very soon after ordered him to be put under an arrest, and then sent him to a castle in Fars, where he had ordered him to be closely confined.

In the 379th year of the Hegira, Sharfodawla sent to Persia a messenger, to deprive his brother, whom he had confined in the castle, of his sight. In the mean time, he himself was attacked by a dropsy, and died at Bagdad; but the cruel deed of depriving Samsamoddawla of his eyes was perpetrated.

Sharfodawla was succeeded in the office of emir al-omra by his brother Bahaoddawla, in which he was confirmed by the caliph Al Tay, a proper instrument having been drawn up for that purpose. Within two years of this time, the caliph was deposed by the emir in the following manner. That minister, coveting the riches of this caliph, sent an imperial officer to desire leave to make him a visit in the palace. The caliph, suspecting no ill design, set apart a solemn festival, in order to do him the greater honour for his reception. When the day appointed came,

Digitized by Google

Bahaoddawla mounted his horse, and went to the palace, where he was received by the caliph, sitting on his throne. As soon as the emir-al-omra had entered the grand saloon, where the ambassadors had their audience, he prostrated himself before the commander of the true believers, and took his place on the seat allotted him, upon which a great number of people rushed into the room. In this confusion, a soldier, who attended the emir, approached the caliph apparently with an intention of kissing his hand; but, having seized it, he dragged him from his throne, rolled him up in a carpet, and carried him to a distance from the palace, where they compelled him to abdicate. He lived twelve years after this event. During this reign, the celebrated Ebn Cariah, the Kadi of Al Sendiyah, and other places in the neighbourhood of Bagdad, died. He was a man of exceedingly quick parts, and the wonder of the age. He could instantly resolve all questions, and decide all juridical questions, without the least hesitation. He spoke with the utmost fluency and propriety; his style was always copious, elegant, and pure: the principal men of the age were his admirers, and took great pleasure in his repartees. They frequently proposed, in writing, ridiculous questions, which drew from him immediate answers, without study or meditation, that excited the mirth and laughter of all who heard them.

A memorable event is, by a grave historian, said to have happened in this reign, which, though not very credible, may be mentioned. A sheep, bigger than an elephant, of an uncommon form, and a prodigious height, came out

Digitized by Google

of the sea, ascended a high hill in the neighbouring country, and from thence, with an exceedingly loud voice, pronounced distinctly the two following words, *cad caroba;* that is, "he has approached:" after repeating the same twice, it returned into the sea. The same thing, continues this writer, happened the next two days, and was never afterwards seen. There was also, in Egypt, a most terrible storm, attended with thunder and lightning, and such darkness as had never been known. It did not cease till towards midnight; nor did the darkness abate till morning; when the hemisphere exhibited a phenomenon resembling a pillar of fire, which communicated an unusual red colour both to the heavens and the earth; the atmosphere was likewise loaded with a sort of dust, which, in a great measure, prevented respiration, and proved extremely noxious to all kinds of animals, till a late hour of the day, when the sun discovered himself, disguised by an unnatural colour. With this colour, he arose every morning for a considerable time. A comet appeared also about this period, in the western part of the hemisphere, and was seen by the people of Egypt above twenty nights successively.

After the deposition of Al Tay, Baha-oddawla became master of the treasures, and of all the rich furniture that he left behind him. Al Kader was elevated to the throne. He was grandson to Al Moktader, to whose family the caliph returned. It appears that, though the Mohammedan throne had suffered such great degradation, still it incessantly occupied the thoughts of those who had any pretensions to it. The courier, who was commis- A. D. 974.

Digitized by Google

sioned to inform Al Tay's successor of his election, found him relating to his friends a dream of the preceding night, which predicted his future greatness.

In the 386th year of the Hegira, Al Aziz, the Fatemite caliph of Egypt, died in the bath at Belbeis. His secretary of state was a Christian, named Isa: and his treasurer, in Syria, a Jew, called Manasseh. The Christians and the Jews, being supported and protected by these men, very frequently insulted the Mussulmen; a circumstance which induced the people of Mesr to make a paper figure in the shape of a woman, and to place it in the road through which Al Aziz was to pass, with a written paper in one of its hands, to the following effect: "We conjure you, by him who has enabled Isa to render the Christians insolent and powerful, and Manasseh, the Jews; and who, by you, has humbled the Mussulmen, to tell us when an end shall be put to the inflictions which we endure." The caliph was so far from being offended with the severity of the libel, that he immediately dismissed Isa, and stripped him of all the wealth he had acquired. This prince has been represented, by Mahommedan writers, as a person of most excellent disposition; a prudent ruler, and a great lover of his people: his goodness and clemency towards his subjects was scarcely to be paralleled, of which the following is a remarkable instance:—A satirical poet had written some severe verses upon the visir and secretary of state, in which the sovereign himself was not spared: the visir carried his complaints to Al Aziz, and demanded to have the author of the verses punished. But the caliph, when he had

Digitized by Google

read them, made the following answer: "As I bear part of the injury offered, so I desire that you would take part with me of the merit of the pardon I shall grant him for the offence." He was succeeded by his son Al Mansur, then only eleven years old. Al Aziz, before his death, appointed Ar-juan, one of his white eunuchs, in whose capacity and fidelity his son could confide, to take upon him the government of his extensive dominions.

The contrast of Al Aziz's clemency may be found in Al Kader's proclamation against the caliphs of Egypt. It breathed all the rancour of theological animosity. "The man who has usurped the throne," said he, "is sprung up like a mushroom from his original nothingness, upon whom may God pour down all his wrath and indignation;—a son of Said's, on whom God never bestowed any inheritance; the descendant of ancestors that were the scum of the human race, the scourge of society, the disgrace of humanity; wretches and impostors! may the eternal malediction of God light on these outcasts; these rebels! may they be for ever execrated by all true lovers of virtue!"

Al Hakem appointed Al Aswad, or the Black, to preside over the people of Damascus. Soon after his arrival at that capital, he began to harass and oppress the Sonnites, in such a manner as gave great offence to many of the Damascenes. A Magrebian soldier, in particular, of that sect, he ordered to be publicly whipped; the crier proclaimed, at the same time, that this, henceforth, would be the reward of those who paid any regard to the memory of Abu Becr and

Digitized by Google

Omar. After which punishment the Magrebian was banished the city.

The king of Al Batitra sent an army under the command of Ebn Wasel, a general on whom he had heaped numerous favours, and whom he had raised from the lowest state to the post of the commander in chief of all his forces, to attack Sira and Basra. Having reduced both these cities, and enriched themselves with the spoils and immense wealth found in them, Ebn Wasel declared himself independent; drove his master out of Al Batiha, and obliged him to fly for refuge to Bagdad. But the reception he experienced was such as manifested the blackest ingratitude in Al Kader, of which any man could be guilty: for, notwithstanding that prince had treated this wretch in the most hospitable and generous manner, and had, in a great measure, put his treasures and kingdom itself into his hands, when he was threatened with immediate death by Al Tay, and forced to seek for an asylum in Al Batiha, Al Kader, at this time, expelled him the city of Bagdad, and drove him, as it were, into the very jaws of destruction. A more flagrant instance of ingratitude than this is, perhaps, not to be found in history. In the same year when this happened, Bahaoddawla conferred upon Al Sharif the office of nakib, or chief of Ali's descendants and followers in Irak; as also the post of supreme Kadi and Iman, with a title signifying a man of the most illustrious virtues. Bahaoddawla's principal secretary, having drawn the proper instruments to be signed by the caliph, in order to his being confirmed in the aforesaid employments, by the authority of

Digitized by Google

that prince, when he appeared with them, Al Kader signed all those instruments, excepting that only which was to constitute him supreme Kadi and Iman; but he refused setting his hand to this paper, not thinking it proper that a Shiite should be invested with so great a degree of authority, as such an important post must necessarily confer.

In the following year, Monteser, finding it impracticable to pass the Jihun, retired, with a few of his adherents, to Bokhara. Upon his arrival, the governor promised to assist him; but, being closely pursued by Ilek Khan's general, to whom most of his men had gone over in disgust, he abandoned that city, and fled into Khorasan. He had not been long in that province, when an officer was sent in search of him, who took him out of a cottage, where he lay concealed, which he broke open in the night, and put him to death.

In the 896th year of the Hegira, a person, descended from one of the caliphs of the house of Ommiyah, took up arms against the Fatemite caliph in Egypt. As this man had first carried water about in bottles as a common porter, he was nicknamed Abu Racwah, or the Father of the Bottle. He set up for a reformer; preached to the people in the streets, highways, and other public places; and, by his pretended sanctity, gained a great number of followers. He first possessed himself of Barka; and afterwards, having vanquished one of the caliph's generals that engaged him, reduced to obedience all the country of Al Said, or the Upper Egypt: by which acquisition of territory, as well as power, he became so formidable, that the caliph found

Digitized by Google

it necessary to employ the forces of the whole Fatemite empire against him. Having, therefore, raised a powerful army in Egypt, and sent orders to his troops in Syria to advance into the neighbourhood of Mesr, he at last attacked the rebels with such intrepidity, that, after a very obstinate and bloody dispute, they were routed with great slaughter. Most of them were cut to pieces in the action, and the rest so dispersed, that not the faintest traces of this rebellion were afterwards to be seen.

Soon after this, an important revolution happened in Andalusia. Mohammed Ebn Hesham, with twelve of his accomplices, rebelled against the caliph, Al Mowayyad, and seized upon the city of Corduba. Being master of the caliph's person, he caused him, privately, to be confined in a house belonging to one of his friends; killed a Christian extremely like him, and pretended he was dead. The principal courtiers being then desired to view the corpse, really took it to be that of the caliph; and it was soon after interred with great funeral pomp. Mohammed, now thinking himself secure, began to oppress his subjects, and insult their wives, in such a manner, as absolutely alienated their affections from him. A conspiracy was excited against him, in which many of his friends were destroyed, and the gates of Corduba were burnt.

However, Mohammed rendered abortive their design; killed several of them, and took a great number prisoners. Having thus extinguished their rebellion, he ordered the principal conspirators to be executed. An attempt was then made to place the caliph's nephew on the throne, which obliged the usurper to bring Al Mowayyad,

Digitized by Google

who was thought to have been dead, out of the place where he had been concealed. This step he took, that he might prevail with the people to submit to their natural prince rather than to Soliman his nephew. But, every one being now struck with terror, no regard was paid to his solicitations; so that he was constrained to fly to Toledo; and Soliman possessed himself of Corduba, where he reigned about seven months. However, distrusting the fidelity of the citizens, he kept the Christian forces, for some time, in Andalusia, and formed a camp of his troops, at a small distance from the city. Mohammed, soon after his flight to Toledo, assembled a very numerous body of soldiers, which was reinforced by two Christian officers of distinction, who were very serviceable to him. Soliman, having been apprised of the preparations that they were making to attack him, endeavoured to engage the people of Corduba to support him. But they, being disaffected to his cause, excused themselves from taking the field. A battle ensued, by which the crown was placed once more upon Mohammed's head; though, in a very short time, he was again driven from the throne, when Al Mowayyad took his place, and ordered him to be beheaded as an usurper. The head was afterwards carried upon the top of a lance through the streets of the metropolis, and his body buried in a corner of the mosque. Soliman, however, who still had the crown in view, caused great ravages in the country about Corduba, Seville, and Palatrava, laying it waste with fire and sword; insomuch, that a very extensive track was almost entirely depopulated; the people entertained thoughts of deposing Al Mowayyad,

Digitized by Google

and of calling Soliman, whom they considered as the only person capable of protecting them, to the crown. That prince, therefore, having been joined by a great number of Mussulmen, who crowded to him from all parts, advanced with a formidable army to the gates of Corduba, and summoned the city to surrender. Finding, however, the garrison and inhabitants resolved to defend it to the last extremity, he invested the place in form, and carried on his attacks with the utmost vigour; the besieged opposing him with equal bravery, and making several successful sallies. However, one of the gates being betrayed into Soliman's hands, he entered the town without opposition; burnt many of the houses and public buildings; destroyed an infinite number of citizens, and gave the place up to his troops to be plundered, for three successive days. The people who survived the carnage, submitted; and the caliph was led out of the city, and permitted to retire into Africa, where he probably ended his days.

During the reign of Al Kader, Kabus, king of Mozanderan, was dethroned by his subjects, who accused him of too great severity. "It is a false pretext," replied he; "I am reduced to this unfortunate situation only because of my lenity to five or six of you, whose blood I should have shed." The insurgents sent for his son, whom they compelled to accept the sceptre, threatening, if he persisted in refusal, to give it to a stranger. As soon as he was inaugurated, he went in search of his father, threw himself at his feet, offered to re-instate him, and to march against the rebels. Kabus, who had retired to a distant castle, charmed to find his son possessed

Digitized by Google

of such filial sentiments, answered him: "In this place I mean to end my exploits, and my life. Do you enjoy my authority; I give it to you." In this retreat his days rolled serenely on, and he tasted the pure and tranquil pleasures, which the sciences bestow on those who feel their value. But his enemies, believing it impossible that he could ever pardon the wrongs they had done him, put a period to his life by poison.

The cause of the antipathy of Al Hakem, the caliph of Egypt and Syria, to women, is unknown; but it is certain that he punished them with a most astonishing degree of severity, prohibiting them to quit their houses, or even to walk on the terraces. To put it beyond their power to disobey him, and effectually to prevent their appearing in the streets of the public places, he prohibited any shoes being made to suit them, and shut up their markets, lest they should be obliged to attend them. Men carried their merchandize through the streets, and the women made their purchases without leaving the door, or death was the consequence of the transgression. It was but just that this tyranny should be punished by a woman. Hakem was murdered, at the instigation of his sister. The scene of this dreadful transaction was near the sepulchre of Al Fokai, towards the eastern part of Holwan. In order to excite Ebn Dawas to the perpetration of so horrid a deed, she promised to place him at the head of the administration, and gave the assassins who were employed under him one thousand dinars. The body of the murdered caliph, which the villains brought her, she buried in her own house, and, for some time, kept his death concealed. But, at last, when

Digitized by Google

the people grew uneasy respecting him, she convoked the grandees and principal courtiers, and discovered the murder. Then she caused Ebn Dawas, and his two domestics, who had embrued their hands in the blood of their sovereign, and all other persons in any manner privy to the affair, to be put to death; though, by some historians, it is said that she slew them with her own hands.

The Egyptians, during his reign, groaned under the pressure of the severest tyranny, which excited several of them to write anonymous letters, complaining of his conduct; and to their complaints they added imprecations. Some went still farther, and placed in the highway a statue resembling a woman, with a girdle and shoes on, holding a sealed paper in her hand. Al Hakem himself, coming to the spot, read the paper, the contents of which gave him such offence, that he commanded the city of Mesr, near which it was, to be reduced to ashes, and all its inhabitants to be put to the sword. The latter of these orders was resisted with uncommon bravery by the citizens: nevertheless, he found means to set the city on fire in several places, though he pretended to be ignorant of both the author and cause of those public calamities. After the flames had raged three whole days, the principal citizens assembled to implore the divine assistance, and to petition Al Hakem to put an end to this conflagration. He returned for answer, that he had neither permitted nor commanded any incendiaries to burn the city. Notwithstanding which assertion, he is known to have encouraged the infamous actors in this tragedy. It was not till a fourth part of the

Digitized by Google

city was consumed, and a great multitude of the inhabitants of both sexes, and all ages and professions, had been massacred, that the caliph interposed in their behalf.

Mahmud Gazni, from simple governor of Khorasan, became, in the caliphate of Kader, a mighty prince, and an illustrious conqueror. He subdued a part of India, and in one of these countries found a temple, whose idol, composed of one solid stone, measured fifty cubits in height. He destroyed it, immolated fifty thousand of its worshippers, and despoiled the temple of twelve columns of massive gold, covered with rubies, and a variety of other precious stones. The gigantic monuments still seen there, prove that, in this sort of workmanship, India was not inferior to Egypt. The riches, which Mahmud obtained from the treasure of one Indian king, only renders probable the accounts we read of the golden pillars. Millions in gold and silver; diamonds in astonishing profusion; magnificent furniture; brocades of inestimable value; all became the spoil of the Persian, without his striking a single blow; as did likewise the crown of the Indian, who vainly flattered himself that his making no resistance would entitle him not only to indulgence, but to the restoration of his throne. Mahmud cruelly undeceived him, and taught him a lesson, which should serve as a warning to princes, who, influenced by such a hope, should be tempted to trust to the moderation of their enemies. He thus addressed the feeble monarch: "Have you read history? Can you play at chess?"—"Yes," replied he. "Well," resumed Mahmud, "did you ever find two kings reigning together in the

Digitized by Google

same nation? or, at chess, two kings occupying the same field? Why then were you, who had the means of defence, so imprudent as to suffer me to become master of your person and your domain?" He sent him into Persia, to Gazna, his capital, where he permitted him to live, probably, because his death was of no utility. This should be duly weighed by all those, whom fate reduces to the cruel alternative of braving death in self-defence, or enduring life ingloriously, by submitting to the foe.

A poor man complained to Mahmud of one of his soldiers having forcibly entered his house in the night, and obliged him to quit it, with his wife and children. "If he should return," said the prince, "let me know." The soldier did return, and the poor man hastened to inform the Sultan, who went with him to his dwelling, ordered the lights to be extinguished, and cut the intruder in pieces. He then, commanding the flambeaux to be lighted, and gazing earnestly on the face of him whom he had put to death, prostrated himself, offered up a prayer of thanksgiving to God, and asked for some refreshment. Barley, bread, and sour wine, were all there was to set before him, and with a contented and cheerful air, he ate and drank of these with an appetite. His host begged to know why the lights had been extinguished, and how he could be satisfied with such coarse fare? Mahmud replied, "Ever since your complaint, my mind has been harassed with the thought that none but one of my own sons would have dared to commit such an act of audacity. I had resolved to shew him no lenity, and commanded the lights to be put out, that his sight might not affect me; but,

Digitized by Google

on seeing that the criminal was not my son, I returned thanks to the Almighty. In short, my being content with the food you placed before me, is not surprising; for the anxiety I have suffered these three days, for the injury done you, deprived me both of appetite and rest." This prince, who was extremely ugly, grieved at his want of personal beauty, lest it should diminish the esteem and affection of his subjects. A poet said to him once on that occasion, if your morals are never more deformed than your features, no one will have reason to complain. From this physical defect, he deduced a moral reflexion, well deserving the attention of even those who do not think themselves homely. Like Mahmud, as they look in a glass, they should say, I observe so many faults in myself, that I can easily forget those of others. Some time before his death, he fixed his residence in India, where he zealously propagated the Mohammedan faith.

Al Kayer peaceably took possession of his father's throne. A reign of forty-four years, serves but to comprise feats of arms, victories, and rebellions; in which he was scarcely concerned. We can only observe, that one of the latter drove him from the throne, to which his repenting subjects, shortly after, recalled him. It is pleasing to believe, that he owed his reinstatement to his virtues; for he was learned, mild, patient, popular, just, and fearing God; competent to state affairs, and capable of giving excellent counsel. His enemies listened to his advice, and his influence preserved peace in his reduced dominions. The Seljuk Turks, afterwards so renowned for their military exploits, first appeared during this reign. They A. D. 1031.

Digitized by Google

had already rendered themselves formidable in Persia, passed the Jihan, and took up their quarters near the cities of Nesef and Abiwerd. Here they settled, and, in a short time, began to make incursions into, and pillage the neighbouring provinces. Several of the cities in India, reduced by Sultan Mahmud, rebelled against Masud; as did also Al Ray, and other places in the Persian Irak; but, in the course of a few months, a letter was received from Sultan Masud, in India, in which he gave an account of his having killed fifty thousand infidels, taken seventy thousand prisoners, and acquired a booty, amounting to above a million of dinars.

In the course of the next year, the Sicilian Mussulmen, being dissatisfied with their governor's administration, sent a deputation to the caliph of Egypt, to complain of his oppressive and tyrannical conduct. That prince, excited by their just complaints, sent an army into Sicily, to oblige the emir to redress all their grievances, and govern, for the future, in a more equitable manner. Al Akhali, being besieged by the caliph's forces at Palermo, defended himself with astonishing bravery till he was slain, when the troops imagined that they had executed their master's orders. The Sicilians, however, who had enabled them to carry their point, soon after, attacked the Africans, put above eight hundred to the sword, and forced the rest to abandon the island, with the utmost precipitation. They then proceeded to the election of a new emir, and unanimously chose the brother of the last to preside over the Mohammedan conquests in Sicily: during whose government those territories were so harassed by civil dissensions,

Digitized by Google

that a way was paved, in a short time, for the reduction of the whole island by the Franks. The emperor, Michael Paphlagon, sent an ambassador to this emir, to make proposals for an accommodation: a treaty of peace was concluded between these two princes to their mutual satisfaction; which, as the emir, in all points, conformed himself to the will of the emperor, so exasperated the Sicilian Mussulmen, especially the lower class of the people, that they resolved to oppose him. His brother, Abu Caab, taking advantage of the ferment occasioned by this disposition, endeavoured to seize upon the office of emir; but, being defeated in a general action, he applied to the caliph of Egypt for assistance, which having obtained, he reduced his brother to such difficulties, that he found himself obliged to quit the island, and fly to Constantinople, in order to implore the protection of the emperor. That prince, who imagined that he had now a fine opportunity of recovering Sicily, treated him with the highest marks of distinction, and promised to support him in all his pretensions, against both his African and Sicilian enemies; but, not being expeditious enough in supplying the dethroned emir with a body of troops, to reinstate him in the government of the Mohammedan part of Sicily, Leo Opus, the prefect of Italy, with a view of driving the infidels out of the island, attended him with all the forces he could in a short time assemble; by which means he overthrew Abu Caab with very great slaughter. This obliged that emir to fly into Egypt, and solicit succours of the Fatemite caliph, who, being apprehensive that the civil dissensions in Sicily might prove

Digitized by Google

fatal to the Mohammedan interest, effected a reconciliation between the contending brothers; and Leo was obliged to abandon the island, and retire to Italy. Between the successful and unfortunate events of this period may be placed the composition of a variety of books, written on the subject of medicine, and the very high respect paid at the Mohammedan courts to the profession of that science. The celebrated Avicenna flourished about this time. He was both a physician and a poet: he was born in the city of Bokhara, though his father was a native of Balkh. By the time he was ten years old, he had learned the Koran by heart, made a great progress in the belles-lettres, and studied Euclid and Ptolemy's Almagest. After he had completed his tenth year, his father sent him to a gardener, to learn arithmetic according to the Indian method of computing; the Indian figures, or arithmetical characters, beginning at this time to be in use among the Arabs. He was afterwards instructed in the rudiments of logic at Bokhara. He then applied himself to the study of physic, and soon attained to a surprising skill in that science; insomuch, that he had read many physical writers, and performed a vast number of cures, when he was but sixteen years of age. The next year and half he spent entirely in reading. When any abstruse and intricate question that puzzled him occurred, he went directly to the mosque; and never ceased offering up his prayers to God till the subject was cleared up to him. He both read and wrote much in the night time, and when his spirits began to flag, he drank a glass of wine, which greatly revived him. Many problems, that had dis-

Digitized by Google

tracted him in his waking hours, were said to have been solved to him in his dreams. When he had finished his studies in physic, logic, natural philosophy, and mathematics, he proceeded to metaphysics and theology. In short, this prodigy of learning had made himself master of every branch of useful literature, and every noble science cultivated in that age, by the time he entered upon his nineteenth year. His father then dying, he travelled into Jorjan and Dahestan; in the latter of which provinces he had a severe fit of sickness. After his recovery, he returned to Jorjan, and composed the first book of his Abridgment of the Almagest, and other pieces held in high esteem. He was afterwards advanced to the dignity of visir, at Hamadah; but the soldiery, being afraid of him, plundered his palace, dragged him to prison, and would have put him to death. He was, however, soon reinstated in his office, though he declined the honours of it, as soon as he conveniently could. He then shut himself up in the house of an apothecary, where he finished his system of mathematics and natural philosophy, except the two books treating of vegetables and animals. He afterwards wrote privately to Alaoddawla, and desired he might be permitted to live with him, but being discovered, he was thrown into prison, where he remained in a state of close confinement for four months; at the expiration of which, he was brought back to Hamadan, from whence he contrived to escape to Effahan. Here he met with a reception from Alaoddawla, worthy of his superior merit, and put the last hand to several of his learned works. He had naturally an excellent constitution, which he had im-

Digitized by Google

paired by youthful excesses; to which he was extremely addicted. Having a most acute fit of the colic, in order to accelerate the cure of the disorder, he had recourse to medicines, which increased rather than diminished it. He languished several days, and then expired. His epitaph, written by a satirical poet, imported, that his scientific and philosophic works had not taught him morality, nor his medicinal, the art of preserving his health.

In the 447th year of the Hegira, Al Kayer, distracted with the insolence of the Turkish militia, which, at this time, rendered Bagdad little better than a scene of riot and confusion, found himself obliged to quit the city of Bagdad, and to put himself under the protection of the caliph of Egypt. That prince supplying him both with money and troops, he soon became very formidable in the Arabian Irak; possessed himself of that province, and ravaged it even to the very gates of Bagdad. Finding no enemy to oppose him, he now looked upon himself as emir-al-omra, and ordered his own name to be mentioned in all the mosques within his jurisdiction: nor did he leave any thing more to Al Malec, who, after the example of his predecessors, had deprived the caliph of all power and authority, except the naked title of the king of Bagdad. Indeed, the caliph himself was informed, that this rebel intended to advance, at the head of his troops, to the capital, and seize upon the imperial palace; upon which he immediately wrote to Togrol Bek for assistance, who was then at Waset. As soon as the caliph's letter reached him, he assembled all his forces, made the proper dispositions for his

Digitized by Google

march, and arrived at Bagdad. He brought with him a numerous army of Turks, and eighteen elephants. Upon his arrival, he immediately waited upon the caliph, and paid him all the honours due to his high dignity. However, the Turks having, soon after, committed several outrages, the people rose upon them, and pelted them with stones; an insult which so incensed Togrol Bek, that he commanded his troops to pillage the city.

In the following year, Al Kayem, the caliph of Bagdad, honoured Togrol Bek with the imperial vest, and crowned him king of Bagdad. He likewise adorned him with the collar and bracelets, appointed him ruler over his court, and ordered money to be coined in his name: nor durst any enemy presume to appear against him, either in the Persian or Arabian Irak, or Khorasan.

Al Kayem was, in the next year, deposed, and Al Mostanser, the caliph of Egypt, proclaimed at Bagdad in his room. While Al Kayem made his escape to the eastern part of the city, Al Basasiri entered Bagdad, with the Egyptian standards, in the name of Al Mostanser, and commanded prayers to be put up for him in the great mosque. Afterwards, he commanded Al Kayem's visir to be fettered, and carried on a camel through the streets of Bagdad, dressed in a woolen gown, with a high red bonnet, and a leathern collar about his neck, a man lashing him all the way behind. Then, being sewed up in a fresh bull's hide, with the horns placed over his head, he was hung upon hooks, and beaten, without ceasing, till he died. In the mean time, the caliph arrived at the camp, where a tent

Digitized by Google

was pitched for him, on the east side of the city. Upon his retreat, the mob plundered the imperial palace of articles, to an inestimable value. Prayers were offered up for Al Mostanser, while Al Kayem was conveyed, in chains, to Haditha. In the very next year, however, he was reinstated in his former authority, and as caliph of Bagdad, was treated with uncommon marks of reverence and distinction; and Al Basasiri thought fit to retire to Waset, where, having collected a vast quantity of corn, he put it on board some vessels then in the river; but, receiving advice of the new revolution at Bagdad, he advanced to Al Nomania, a place at no great distance from that city. Here a battle ensued, which ended in the defeat of Al Basasiri, who was himself killed in the action; and his head, being struck off, was, by the order of Togrol Bek, carried on a pike through the streets of Bagdad.

Soon after, Togrol Bek demanded Al Kayem's daughter in marriage, but was refused her by the caliph, who thought it too great an honour for a Turk to aspire to. Togrol's visir, therefore, advised his master to retrench, by degrees, the caliph's revenues; upon which the Sultan forbade Al Kayem's officers to touch the public money. This prohibition reduced the caliph to such distress, that he suffered himself to be persuaded to let Togrol take the princess, though much against his will. The Sultan, having thus carried his point, revoked the order he had given for seizing the caliph's treasures; and, being highly pleased with that prince's compliance, sent him very rich presents. The same year, Maezzoddawla, the Saheb, or lord of Aleppo, departed this life, and was buried in the citadel.

Digitized by Google

He is reported to have been a just, merciful, and generous prince. A servant having once, by accident, beat out one of his fore-teeth, he said, "This happened by the providence and power of God, and he would not punish him for it;" an incident which has been produced as an instance of his superior goodness and clemency.

In the following year, Seida, the caliph's daughter, was conducted to Togrol, who received her with great demonstrations of joy, and bestowed gifts on all the caliph's servants that accompanied her. The marriage was celebrated at Al Ray, his royal seat, then the capital of the Persian Irak; he having made the proper dispositions for receiving her with the utmost splendour and magnificence: but, finding the heat at that time excessive, he retired to Rudbar, where he had a most beautiful palace. Here he proposed to take some refreshment in that hot and sultry season, and was attacked by a bloody flux, which carried him off in a few days. He has been represented as a merciful and prudent prince, extremely well versed in the art of government. All the neighbouring sovereigns exceedingly feared him, and wrote to him in the most submissive style.

The princess Seida returned to Bagdad, where she was received by her father, who, in a few years, paid the debt of nature. At the time of his death, he was seventy-six years old, and had sat forty-four years upon the throne. When he perceived his end approaching, he appointed Al Kayem, his grandson, to succeed him, and sent for the principal grandees to attend as witnesses to this designation. Al Kayem was learned, patient, mild, and sincere; a prince of an excellent

Digitized by Google

political capacity, capable of giving the most salutary advice on any emergency, just, and one who exceedingly feared God. He cultivated the belles-lettres; had a taste for poetry; and left behind him several poetical compositions, which were held in great esteem. Not long before his decease, we are told, that such heavy rains fell in Arabian Irak, that they occasioned an extraordinary inundation of the Tigris; insomuch, that many animals were carried away by the rapidity of the current; and that the caliph himself was, in an instant, so surrounded by the waters on his throne, that he must have inevitably perished, had not one of his slaves taken him on his shoulders, and preserved him from the impending fate.

During this reign, a most dreadful earthquake laid in ruins Al Ramla Isanis, and many other cities. The havoc occasioned by this catastrophe was so great, that two thousand five hundred men, women, and children, perished at Al Ramla only; vast numbers also meeting with the same unhappy fate, in many of the neighbouring cities. A grievous famine likewise raged in Egypt; insomuch, that a dog was not to be bought for less than five dinars, nor a cat for less than three. Al Montanser's visir came one day to the imperial palace, attended by a single servant, and left his horse at the gate, which was quickly carried off by three men, who killed him, that they might feed on his flesh. The visir, complaining of this insult to the caliph, they were immediately executed, and their bodies fixed to a gibbet erected for that purpose. The next day, however, nothing was to be seen of them but the bones; the flesh being all gree-

Digitized by Google

dily devoured by the miserable wretches inhabiting the spot where the gibbet stood; for the Egyptians not only fed on the carcases of all kinds of beasts, but likewise the bodies of men, women, and children; many of the latter of which they boiled, and sold publicly for food. Before the beginning of this dreadful calamity, the caliph had about ten thousand two hundred horses, mules, and camels, in his stables; but, at the end of it, he had only three horses left. That prince himself was obliged to part with his plate, tapestry, sumptuous garments, treasures, jewels, and valuable furniture, for sustenance. The people of Egypt were also visited by a plague this year, which swept away the greater part of the inhabitants of that country. These calamities, we are told, were presaged by comets, that appeared a little before they happened, and other prodigies which have been taken notice of by the Egyptian writers.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

Empire of the Arabs, under the House of Al Abbas, continued.

A. D. 1075. AL KAYER died at seventy-six, and was succeeded by his grandson, Al Moktadi. The new caliph performed the funeral ceremony at his predecessor's interment, and enjoyed a prosperous reign. The people of Syria, Arabia, Palestine and Irak, recognized his authority, and the city of Bagdad flourished while he sat on the Mohammedan throne. He was born six months after his father's death, and was the only male of Al Kayer's family that survived him. He was the twenty-seventh caliph of the house of Al Abbas, and had more respect paid him by Malec Shah, the emir-al-omra, than had been received from the sultan, or prime minister of the caliphate, by many of his predecessors. Al Moktadi married the daughter of his emir, a lady of great beauty; and the public rejoicings at Bagdad, when she made her entry into that capital, were such as surpassed every thing of the kind, that had happened before in the Mohammedan world; for all the streets of the city were illuminated with wax torches on this occasion; and the caliph, in order to demonstrate his affection for her, prepared a most magnificent entertainment. Twenty-four thousand pounds of sugar is said to have been consumed in the dessert alone.

Digitized by Google

Malec Shah, in the next year, performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, at an incredible expence; for, besides abolishing the usual tribute, which the pilgrims paid, he employed very large sums in building towns in the desert, where he ordered a great number of wells and cisterns to be made, and water to be conveyed to them from all parts. He likewise commanded plenty of provisions to be carried for the subsistence of the pilgrims, and distributed immense sums among the poor, with unparalleled liberality.

Before Malec Shah's daughter had been long married to Al Moktadi, she left her husband in disgust, and returned to Esfahan, then her father's residence, and the capital of the Seljukian empire, where she remained till the time of her death. At this period, the brother of Severus, the metropolitan of Ethiopia, came into Egypt with presents for Al Jemal, Al Mostanser's visir, which by no means pleased him. As soon as the visir had received them, he sent for the Alexandrian patriarch, and demanded why he had ordained the metropolitan of Ethiopia, without paying the usual sum to the Fatemite caliph. He likewise complained, that the metropolitan had neither caused any mosques to be erected in Ethiopia, nor sent him any rich presents, as he had promised. To this expostulation, a bishop, who attended the patriarch, replied, "that the metropolitan of Ethiopia had been ordained only by his express order:" To which the visir answered, "That both he and the patriarch lied." He then insisted upon their sending two bishops immediately into Ethiopia, who should take care to have a certain number of mosques built in that province, and see that divine ser-

Digitized by Google

vice was performed in them, after the Mohammedan manner. The visir also gave them to understand, that complaints had been made respecting the Mohammedan merchants, who were not permitted to trade in Ethiopia; and, if this were true, he knew what course to take. He then dismissed the patriarch, and his attendant bishops; having first quartered a soldier upon each of them, who were to be maintained at their expence. In a short time after, the visir sent for them again, and, when they appeared before him, he accused the patriarch of driving a Mohammedan merchant out of Ethiopia, and seizing upon all his substance; but it was proved, in answer to this accusation, that at the time when these things were said to have been done, Severus was in prison, where he had been confined by the king of Ethiopia. The visir then said, that the Metropolitan had promised to build four mosques in Ethiopia, and that he had not kept his word. His brother instantly replied, "that he had actually built seven, which the Ethiopians had pulled down, and the king had imprisoned him for what he had done." This declaration pacified the visir, who dispatched an ambassador, with the bishops, to the court of Ethiopia; sending a letter to the king, importing, "that if he did not accede to every one of the demands contained in it, he would demolish all the Christian churches in Egypt." To this the Ethiopian monarch made answer, "That if he displaced even a single stone in any of the Christian churches under his jurisdiction, he would send him all the stones and tiles from the temple at Mecca. From which it appears, that the Ethiopians were, at this time, far from being

Digitized by Google

Mohammedans, nor was the religion of the prophet publicly tolerated in Ethiopia.

In the following year, the Bataniyah besieged the castles of Delam and the Persian Irak. The first they took belonged to Kamah, a prince in alliance with Malec Shah, and was delivered by Kamah's lieutenant to Al Hasan, who had seduced him, by twelve hundred dinars. This Al Hasan was a native of Meru, in Khorasan, but, going into Egypt, he met with a Batanist, who converted him to their persuasion; and, by the consent of the people, made him, whose family was one of the noblest in Meru, the chief and head of the sect. He had many followers, who paid an implicit obedience to his commands. As he soon grew considerable, Malec Shah sent him a threatening letter, requiring his submission. Al Hasan hereupon ordered the Sultan's messengers to be brought before him, when he sent for a company of his people, and commanded one of them, a young man, to kill himself; an order which he instantly obeyed, without the least hesitation. He ordered another to throw himself headlong from the top of the castle, which he performed immediately, and broke his neck. After this prelude, Al Hasan told the Seljukian ambassador, that he had no other answer to return to the Sultan, than that he had seventy thousand men at his command, who would obey him in the manner which he had seen. Malec Shah was greatly surprised when these things were related to him; and, having other affairs on his hands, he thought it not advisable to enter into a war with that prince. Soon after this, he went upon a hunting party, with many attendants; and, eating some of the

Digitized by Google

flesh of the game that they had killed, he returned sick to his palace. A vein was opened but little blood issued, and his illness increased to a burning fever, which in a few days put an end to his life.

The caliph Al Moktadi died in the 487th year of the Hegira, at Bagdad. The sultan Barkiarok having entered that city, made many rich and valuable presents to the caliph, and demanded the patent of investiture of that prince. This being granted by Al Moktadi, he ordered the instrument to be drawn out in form, when he perused it, and commanded the sultan's vest to be carried to Barkiarok. After he had dined and washed his hands, he read the patent over a second time, and then immediately asked one of his women, who was then with him, who those persons were that presumed to come into the room, and to approach him, without his permission. The woman, astonished at this question, turned her head about to discover who they were, but seeing nobody, she cast her eyes upon the caliph, and perceived his countenance change, his hands and feet at the same time failing him, and that very instant he dropped down dead on the ground. Terrified at this circumstance, though she at first thought him only in a swoon, she immediately called in his servant. Mansur, his visir, and Ashmed, his son and successor, being then sent for, his body was prepared for interment, and afterwards buried with the usual ceremonies. He had reigned nearly twenty years. With regard to his character, he is said to have been extremely well versed in the institutions of Mohammedism ; a lover of learning and honest men, brave, courte-

Digitized by Google

ous, beneficent, and a very good poet. He had a steady regard to justice, and reformed a great number of abuses that had crept into the state. He took great delight in patronizing men of erudition, and had many excellent works dedicated to him. His views for the advancement of the sciences, were well seconded by Malec Shah. They assembled all the ablest astronomers that flourished at this time, in order to reform the calendar. The distemper that carried him off so suddenly, the Arabs call a plague; they believe that it proceeds from certain spirits, armed with bows and arrows, sent by God to punish men for their sins; and when the wounds are given by spectres of a black colour, they certainly prove mortal, but not so when the arrows are shot by those that appear white. It is in this manner that Mussulmen reason upon the plague; and it is upon this foundation that they never take any precautions to guard themselves against it.

During this reign died Cyril, the jacobite patriarch of Alexandria. He read some time before his death the four Gospels in Coptic, and wrote commentaries upon them in Arabic, the Coptic being then, especially among the common people, but little understood. He spent all the money he could spare, in relieving the poor, in repairing and building churches, and in other acts of charity: so that when he died, he did not leave a single dirken behind him. He fasted often, and lived, in general, till evening, upon pulse; other food being prepared for his scholars or disciples. He employed much of his time in praying, and frequently conversed with those about him, upon divine subjects.

Digitized by Google

Al Montanser Billah, the caliph of Egypt, died in the same year with Al Moktadi, after he had reigned about sixty years. He survived only a few months Al Jemal, his general and visir, who for several years had the sole management and direction of the Egyptian affairs; Al Montanser being in reality nothing better than a nominal prince, and is celebrated only for the length of his reign. A little before the visir departed this life, he obtained the instrument of investiture from his master, by which Abul Kasem, his son, was appointed to succeed him in the post of visir, had the title of the king of kings conferred upon him, and received the honourable appellation of Afdal. In Al Montanser's reign, Michael, the patriarch of Alexandria, was sent with magnificent presents to the king of Ethiopia, to prevail upon that monarch to open the channel that conveyed water to Egypt, which for some time had been stopped. This obstruction had reduced the caliph's subjects almost to the last extremity. The king granted the patriarch's request, in consequence of which, it is said, that the Nile rose three yards in one night, and rendered the land of Egypt as capable of cultivation as ever. The caliph treated the patriarch with uncommon marks of distinction at his return, and munificently rewarded him for the important service he had done his country.

A. D. 1094. Ahmed, Al Moktadi's son, was acknowledged caliph of Bagdad as soon as his father's death was publicly known. In a short time after, he assumed the title of Al Mostadher. His authority was confirmed by the consent of Barkiarok, who was at that time

Digitized by Google

with his army at Bagdad. He also secured to himself the office of emir-al-omra, or sultan, as the prime minister to the caliph was at this time called; and in consequence of the high office which he filled, as well as by the great power he had acquired, he was completely master of Al Mostadher's person, and even of the caliphate itself. He inaugurated the caliph, who reciprocally invested him with the power, gave him the appellation of "the column, or support of religion;" and commanded that prayers should be offered for him in the mosque. It appears that these prayers were a sort of nominal consecration, which, in the eyes of the people, rendered the authority of the chiefs lawful. The caliph of Bagdad was the dispenser of this favour, which was solicited by the sovereigns of Damascus, Aleppo, Antioch, and even by those of Persia and Egypt. They all assumed the title of caliph, but still they acknowledged the pre-eminence to the throne of Bagdad.

To his arbitration was referred treaties between rival princes; their arguments passed in his presence, to which he gave his sanction. Without doubt some compensation was made him for his trouble, and that perhaps might constitute one of the principal sources of his revenue. It appears that the quality most desirable in him, was that of a conciliator, well acquainted with the laws, and the friend of peace. It certainly were to be wished also, that his manners should be gentle and persuasive, and his morals irreproachable, that the public esteem might give weight to his decisions.

Soon after Al Mostadher's accession, the astrologers at Bagdad predicted an inundation

Digitized by Google

little inferior in its extent and effects, to the general deluge that happened in the days of Noah; a prediction which struck the people of that metropolis, as well as the court, with the utmost terror and consternation. The caliph sent for Ebn Isun, one of his most celebrated astrologers, in order to interrogate him about the impending judgments with which he and his subjects, and even almost the whole race of mankind, were threatened. Ebn Isun being brought before him, said—that in Noah's time all the seven planets met in the sign of Pisces; but that only six of them, Saturn being in another part of the heavens, would meet in that sign, the present year. Had Saturn, continued he, occupied any part of the above-mentioned sign, when all the other planets were there, an universal deluge would have been the consequence. However, added he, there most certainly will be a dreadful inundation, which will lay under water some considerable city or district, where a vast multitude of people from different countries will be assembled. As there was a prodigious concourse of merchants, and others, from all the regions of the east at Bagdad, this prediction so terrified the inhabitants of that capital, who were extremely numerous, that they erected mounds or dams in those places which seemed to be most exposed to an irruption of the waters, and took other precautions, which they judged necessary for their security: and in conformity to this prediction it so happened, that most of the pilgrims going to Mecca, and who had pitched their tents in the valley of Al Manaked, were carried away by an irresistible torrent, together with their beasts of burden, baggage,

Digitized by Google

and every thing they brought with them, and drowned; a few of them only escaping, who found means to retire to the neighbouring mountains. This tragical event so raised the reputation of Ebn Aysun, that the caliph made him a present of a sumptuous vest, in order to do him honour as a reward for the skill he had shewn in his art.

Barkiarok marched into Khorasan, where Arslan Shah had on foot a considerable body of troops: but the sultan was delivered from all future apprehensions of Arslan Shah by one of that prince's sons, who slew his father before he had an opportunity of coming to any engagement with Barkiarok. He committed that parricide in order to seize his father's government, which, however, did not fall to his share; for Barkiarok, having made himself master of Khorasan, appointed Sanjar, one of his brothers, to preside over that province, and returned to Irak. However, Arslan Shah was assassinated by one of his domestics, to free mankind as he pretended of m his injustice.

About the first or second campaign of the famous crusades, a numerous army of Franks, under the command of king Baldwin, entered Syria, besieged Antioch, and took that city: and in the following year they presented themselves before Jerusalem, and having erected two towers against it, they took it on the north side, and put the inhabitants to the sword. They continued to kill the Mussulmen in the adjacent country for several weeks together, destroying in the chapel Al Kasa seventy thousand people at one time. They likewise drove all the Jews into their temple, and burnt them in it. Amongst

Digitized by Google

the booty acquired on this occasion, which was immense, there were above forty thousand silver lamps, a furnace of the same metal, and above twenty lamps of gold. The loss of Jerusalem was not less regretted by the Jacobite Christians than by the Mussulmen themselves; since the Franks would not permit them to go on pilgrimage thither, nor even on any account whatever to approach that place. When the news of this terrible destruction reached Bagdad, the terrified courtiers who brought it implored both the caliph's and sultan's assistance in the most affecting terms. The inhabitants of that city insisted upon immediate relief; indeed, so transported were they with grief, and so infatuated on the occasion, that they forgot their duty to God, and neglected the most solemn fast of Ramadan.

The Franks, after some time, elated with their success, advanced to Tripoli, and laid siege to that city, and soon after they took Acca by storm: but by a reverse of fortune, two generals of the Franks were defeated by the Mohammedans in Syria, where they lost ten thousand men. Tripoli, after having sustained a seven years' siege, in which the greater part of the inhabitants had been destroyed by fatigue, famine, and the sword, was obliged to capitulate. This city was at that time full of Mohammedans, and contained very many learned men. Two years after the Franks made themselves master of Saida, and all the coast of Syria. A dreadful tempest happened in Egypt, which filled the air with clouds of dust. The heat was excessively great, and the sky was red as fire. A species of the aurora borealis, resembling

Digitized by Google

flames, moved from one part of the hemisphere to another; which was followed with so thick a darkness as had not been known in the memory of man. These strange and surprising phenomena so terrified many people, that they abandoned their houses, imagining that the day of judgment must certainly be at hand.

A. D. 1198. In the 512th year of the Hegira, the caliph Al Mostadher departed this life at Bagdad, in the 25th year of his reign, and was succeeded by Al Mostarshed, who, in some degree, revived the ancient splendour of the caliphate. He would not suffer any dictator, but acted for himself. His brother, Abul Hasan, aspiring himself to the throne, assembled a large body of troops in the Arabian Irak, openly revolted against his brother, and claimed the title of caliph. The dignity, however, to which he aspired was very short lived. Al Mostarshed came up with him, gave him battle, and completely defeated him. Hasan was taken prisoner in the action, and was sent to the caliph, who generously granted him his life, and set him at liberty. The same year Baldwin, who assumed the title of the king of Jerusalem, marched with a powerful army into Egypt, in order to make himself master of that opulent region; but swimming, for his amusement, in the Nile, a wound which he had formerly received opened afresh, and could not be healed; this obliged him to return to Jerusalem, where he died.

A caliph of Bagdad was now seen at the head of his armies, not only exercising an independent authority in the city, but attempting to extend it once more over princes, who imagined

Digitized by Google

that deference was all they owed him. Al Mostarshed sent a severe message to Zenki, the atabec of the Arabian Irak; the person who delivered it, relying on the power and authority of his master, added several reproaches of his own: for which insolence Zenki ordered him to be arrested, and treated with great indignity. The caliph, having received advice of the insult offered him in the person of his ambassador, marched with an army of thirty thousand men from Bagdad to Al Mawsel, and was met by Zenki, at a small distance from the latter of these places; but not being able to oppose the caliph, that prince invested the city of Al Mawsel, and afterwards besieged it in form. Whilst he pressed the place closely without, a company of plaisterers within agreed to betray it to him; but being discovered and executed, he raised the siege, after he had carried it on ineffectually about three months, and returned to Bagdad. About this time the repose of the army, as well as of the court in Egypt, was disturbed by factions; one of which was headed by Al Haken's son, who endeavoured to excite the emirs to revolt. The soldiers were divided into two powerful parties, some of them espousing the tenets of the Sonnites, and others those of the Shirites. This division occasioned the points in debate between those two sects to be controverted amongst the troops, already inflamed against one another by political broils, with so much heat, that they came to an engagement, and many on both sides were slain.

The 529th year of the Hegira proved fatal to sultan Togrol and the caliph Al Mostarshed; the former died at Hamadan, and was reckoned

Digitized by Google

just and valiant, good-natured, and liberal, and did nothing unbecoming a prince. Upon Togrol's death, his brother Masud, then at Bagdad, was invited by his friends at Hamadan to repair immediately to that city, in order to assume the government, and a courier was dispatched to him for that purpose. Masud being apprised, in the city of Alra, that the caliph of Bagdad, in violation of his engagements, had ordered his name to be suppressed in the public prayers, and deprived of the title and quality of sultan, he advanced at the head of a powerful army into Arabian Irak, where he was met by Al Mostarshed, accompanied by a great number of the principal nobility and lords of his court. The two armies came to a general action, when the caliph's left wing deserted to the sultan; he was himself surrounded and taken, whilst his right wing, after a slight opposition, fled. After this defeat, Bagdad opened its gates to Masud, without making any resistance. The caliph was confined in a tent at some distance from the army, where messages passed between him and the sultan relating to peace. At length it was agreed that Al Mostarshed should pay an annual tribute, and remain in Bagdad; he was then permitted to ride on horseback, with the harness of a horse, in token of honour, carried before him. He was even upon the point of returning to Bagdad, when intelligence being brought of the arrival of an ambassador, the people followed Masud to meet him, and among the rest some of those who had the care of the caliph. The defenceless condition of that prince, who was now left without a guard, excited a number of people to rush into his tent and as-

Digitized by Google

sassinate him, by giving him no less than twenty wounds. Not satisfied with the perpetration of this horrid deed, they barbarously cut off his nose and ears, and left him, by way of contempt, naked upon the spot. Many believed that Masud was at the bottom of this affair, and amused him with the appearance of an accommodation only in order to conceal his design. Al Mostarshed enjoyed an excellent constitution, and is said to have possessed the rare talent of expressing much in a few words. He was succeeded by his son,

A. D. 1135. Al Rashid, whom Masud obliged to enter into an engagement not to revenge his father's death. He signed a deed to the following purport: "If ever I raise troops; if I quit Bagdad; if I put to death any person attached to sultan Masud, I shall have deposed myself." The expected event soon occurred. Masud demanded a sum of money, which he insisted the caliph had promised him; to which the latter refused compliance, and recalled the troops from the neighbouring provinces to his assistance. Masud besieged him in his capital; dissensions arose between the allies; and the pontiff, extremely pressed by the enemy, considered himself fortunate in securing his safety by flight. Masud entered Bagdad, assembled the judges and doctors of the law, and shewed them the writing, by which Al Rashid had deposed himself. Who had been the aggressor, or whether Masud had not given the pontiff provocation, was not the subject of enquiry. Masud was the strongest; and Rashib was deposed by unanimous consent, after reigning but one year.

Digitized by Google

A. D. 1136. The same assembly that had declared Al Rashib unworthy of his exalted station, proclaimed Al Moktafi, his uncle, to be his successor. As this caliph owed his elevation entirely to Masud, he did not think of exercising the least power or authority during that prince's life, but after his death he asserted his independence, and assumed the reins of authority, not only in Bagdad but in the greater part of Persia and Arabia, which had been subject to Masud.

Masud was, at the time of his death, about forty-five years old, and had reigned almost nineteen years. He was a great lover of pious and learned men, humble and affable; superior to all the Seljukian princes for religion, clemency, and justice. His bravery was also celebrated; he is said to have defeated armies at the first onset, and to have killed lions with a single stroke. He frequently, when a boy, was in battles, and fought hand to hand with the enemy. He always proved victorious in the wars with his brothers; the people lived in ease and plenty through the whole course of his reign; he disregarded treasures, distributing them among his courtiers, which was the reason that he was almost always poor. This prince was the last of the Seljukian sultans that had any power in the Arabian Irak; for upon his decease Al Moktafi deprived them of all authority in the city of Bagdad.

Al Moktafi died after having reigned twenty-four years and three months; he was the first that reigned in the Arabian Irak without a sultan, and governed his armies as well as his subjects according to his own will, since the time

Digitized by Google

that the Mameluke or Turkish militia began to dispose of every thing in the caliphate, and consequently to deprive of their just authority the successors of Mohammed under Al Montaser. It appears that Al Moktafi recovered almost all that sultan Masud had possessed himself of in the mountainous parts of the Persian Irak; and that no considerable tumults or commotions disturbed his repose during the remainder of his prosperous reign.

About this period many violent shocks of an earthquake were felt in Syria, and which extended as far as Tripoli and Antioch, by which an incredible number of people perished under the ruins of the several towns that were destroyed. A school fell down at Kama while the master was out on some particular business, and crushed to pieces all the scholars; and as none of their parents came afterwards to enquire for any of them, it is probable that they all likewise shared the same fate. When this shock happened at Shaizar, the saheb of that place was circumcising his child, and a great number of people was assembled to witness the ceremony, one of whom only escaped, when the house was thrown down, and he was killed by the kick of a horse as he attempted to go out of the gate. We find also, that Mohammed, surnamed Gayathoddin, died about this time. He is reported to have quitted life with extreme regret, so much so, that, before he expired, he ordered his troops, his court, and all his treasures, to pass before him, as it were, in a view; and after he had considered all these things, said, "How is it possible that a power so formidable as mine is not able to diminish the weight of my disorder one single

Digitized by Google

grain, nor to prolong my life only for a moment." He then concluded his reflection with the following remarkable words: "Unhappy is the person who spends his time in amassing those things which he must leave, and does not make the principal object of regard that Being in whom all things are to be found."

The caliph, Al Moktafi, appointed his son Yusef to succeed him a little before his death; but one of his concubines, by whom he had a son, surnamed Abu Ali, formed a design to assassinate Yusef, during the caliph's last illness; hoping, by that means, to advance her son to that supreme dignity. For this purpose, she armed a great number of the women of the palace with knives, and hired them to kill him when he went to visit his father. The conspiracy being discovered to Yusef by a little eunuch, whom he constantly sent to enquire after the old caliph's health, and who once, on his return, saw them with knives in their hands, he immediately put on a coat of mail, took his sword in his hand, and went directly to the imperial palace. This he no sooner entered than the women attacked him; but he defended himself so bravely, that he put them to flight. Abu Ali and his mother, who both fell into his hands, he caused to be imprisoned; but the female assassins he treated in a more rigorous manner: some of them were publicly executed, and others thrown into the Tigris. Al Moktafi, dying, Yusef was saluted caliph, and assumed the surname of Al Montanjed.

A. D. 1160.

Several years prior to his decease, Al Moktafi had declared his son Al Mostanjed his successor, who immediately mounted the throne, and go-

Digitized by Google

verned peaceably for eleven years. That his was the reign of justice, the following anecdote will prove. A man being convicted of calumny, was sent by him to prison. One of his nobles offered to give him two thousand pieces of gold coin for his release; to which the caliph replied, "Put another man, guilty of the same crime, in my power, and I will give you ten thousand; for I am extremely anxious to clear my dominions of these pests of society."

In the 358th year of the Hegira, Shawer was advanced to the high office of visir, in which he had scarcely been three days, when he was joined by a great number of Arabs and soldiers, who flocked to him from the western parts of Egypt, and other places, especially in the desert, insomuch, that he found himself at the head of a large army, consisting of more than ten thousand horse. The Arabs, addicted to rapine, and accustomed to robbery, he detached in different parties, to ravage and plunder all the lands belonging to those who persisted in their attachment to Ebn Takay, giving them the spoil that they should acquire on this occasion, that they might be the more active in their depredations. The Arabs, animated by this concession, executed Shawer's orders with great alacrity and success; who, thereupon, pursued his march almost to the very gates of Al Khirah and Mesr, and there encamped. Takay and his friends were so terrified at Shawer's approach, that they immediately abandoned the metropolis, taking care, however, to conceal their most valuable jewels in a bag under the saddle of his horse, and then fled into the desert with the utmost precipitation. Here falling into the hands of

Digitized by Google

the Arabs, he was stripped, plundered, and left naked, where he remained till he almost perished with hunger and cold. Being, however, at last known, Yakub, the Arab emir, commanded him to be brought into his tent, and to be conducted from thence under an escort to Shawer at Al Kahirah. Here he was received as a friend, had proper apartments assigned him in the visir's palace, and was attended by some of his own domestics. Indeed, Shawer, who had succeeded him in the post of visir, and assumed the title of the commander of the armies, frequently conferred with him, and invited him to his table: but, being some time after accused of meditating a flight, and of exciting the Egyptians to a revolt, he was thrown into irons, which, endeavouring to file off, Shawer's son entered the place of his confinement, and, to the regret of his father, who was not privy to the affair, immediately cut off his head. Shawer had not been long possessed of the supreme authority before Al Dargam, an officer of rank, endeavoured to drive him from the Fatemite caliph's councils, and at last, after a decisive action, obliged him to fly into Syria. Here he implored the assistance and protection of Nuroddin, promising to remit him the third part of the annual revenue of Egypt, if he would march a formidable army into that country, and re-instate him in the important office of visir. In the mean time, Al Dargam assumed the government of the Fatemite empire. As for Shawer, after his arrival at Damascus, he lived with Nuroddin, and was treated by him with uncommon marks of respect. Nuroddin was a most implacable enemy of the Christians, and Shawer, in order to bring

Digitized by Google

him into his views, informed him that the Franks had penetrated into Egypt, and made a considerable progress in the conquest of that opulent country, and therefore begged that he would send an army, not only to expel them from thence, but to re-instate him in the office of visir. To this he agreed, and, in a pitched battle, he entirely defeated the Franks, having killed a prodigious number of men, and taken a multitude of prisoners. Al Dargam and his brother were also put to the sword, and Shawer had now no competitor to dispute with him the post of visir. About the same time, Al Esfahani died; his corpse was carried by Nuroddin's general and faithful friend, through Mecca to Medina, where he desired to be interred. Persons were appointed to attend the body, and proclaim prayers in every town they came to, for the repose of the deceased soul. Upon their arrival at Mecca, the body was carried round the Caaba; from thence it was conveyed to Medina, and deposited in a little chapel, built by himself for that purpose, at no great distance from the tomb of the prophet.

In the next year, Nuroddin took from the Franks their strongest castle in Syria, which was at no great distance from Tripoli. A short time previously to this, Shawer had concluded a treaty with the Franks, which alarmed Nuroddin, being afraid that it would enable the Christians to make themselves masters of Egypt. He sent, therefore, Shairacuh, with a body of two thousand horse, into that country; and he was attended by Saladin, his nephew, much against his inclination. Shawer, having been joined by the Franks, put himself at the head of the combined army, went

Digitized by Google

in quest of the enemy, and at last came up with them, when a sharp engagement ensued, which ended in the defeat of Shawer and the Franks. This victory put a large district of country into Shairacuh's hands, and facilitated the reduction of Alexandria, before which he presented himself. Here he left his nephew Saladin with a proper garrison, and then advanced with his forces towards Al Said. After his departure, the enemy shut up Saladin in Alexandria, and kept him closely besieged for the space of three months. Shairacuh, therefore, returned, in order to force the Franks and Egyptians to raise the siege, upon which a negociation was set on foot, and an accommodation was effected between the contending powers. The Egyptians retook possession of Alexandria, and a new convention was signed between them and the Franks, the principal articles of which were, that the Franks should receive annually, out of the revenues of Egypt, one hundred thousand dinars, and that they should be allowed to have a garrison with a commandant at Al Kahira.

Two years after, the Franks, having taken Belbeis, and having grown superior to the Mohammedans in Egypt, Nuroddin sent a large army to drive them from thence. After the Franks had carried the city of Belbeis by storm, they advanced to Al Kahira, which they invested and laid siege to. Shawer, the Fatemite caliph's visir, had set on fire the ancient city of Mesr, and ordered all the inhabitants to go to Al Kahira before the Franks appeared in the neighbourhood of that place. Shawer, who had failed in the performance of his engagements, by not remitting to Nuroddin the third part of

Digitized by Google

the public revenues of Egypt, waited every day upon Shairacuh, made him large promises, and endeavoured to excuse his shameful conduct. He likewise expressed the highest regard for Shairacuh, Saladin, and all Nuroddin's other generals, though he had formed a design to invite them to a splendid entertainment, in order that he might secure all their persons. But this soon transpiring, they, willing to be beforehand with him, seized him, and were conducting him to Shairacuh, who was that morning gone upon a visit to Al Shafei's tomb, and his servants, seeing what had happened to their master, immediately made their escape. After which, he was brought, bound, to Shairacuh, which, as soon as the caliph knew, he dispatched a messenger to demand his head, which was immediately cut off by Shairacuh's orders, and sent him without delay. Shairacuh immediately succeeded to the high office of visir, and Shawer's head was fixed upon the point of a spear, and carried through the streets of the city. When Shairacuh, however, entered the metropolis, both the populace and soldiery rose upon him, and attacked him with unparalleled fury; upon which, in order to pacify them, he cried out, "The caliph has given you all the immense treasures that Shawer has amassed." This declaration diverted their rage: they drove to Shawer's palace, plundered it, and stript it of every thing valuable, while Shairacuh was now received every where with loud acclamations, and all possible demonstrations of joy. Shawer son lived as a private person in the palace to he time of his death; so Shairacuh enjoyed the h dignity to which he had been advanced, wit ut opposition or dread

Digitized by Google

of a competitor. Nevertheless, the authority he had acquired was not of any considerable duration: he died in the course of two months, and was succeeded in that high employment by Saladin.

When Saladin had secured to himself the charge of visir, and found himself master of the caliphate of Egypt, he distributed all the immense treasures which had been accumulated among the emirs and the troops: by this instance of liberality, he entirely gained their affections; he likewise abstained from wine and gaming, to which he had been extremely addicted; and, in order to expiate his former crimes, he resolved to enter upon a holy war, and attempted to drive the Christians out of the Mohammedan territories. He also circumvented and cut off the commander of the blacks, or negroes, that guarded the imperial palace, and garrisoned the citadel of Al Kahirah, putting, after a desperate engagement, the greatest part of those troops to the sword. That officer, though an eunuch, was a person of uncommon resolution and magnanimity, and, for some time, singly opposed the power of the new visir. The destruction of this corps opened a passage for Saladin into the castle, who, thereupon, appointed a white eunuch commandant of that place, and assigned him a proper garrison for its defence. Saladin, being thus master of Egypt, begged Nuroddin would send his father and family, then at Damascus, to him, which request being granted, upon their arrival in Egypt, he treated them with uncommon marks of distinction, made them many rich presents, and settled upon them lands and possessions of very considerable value.

Digitized by Google

The following year proved fortunate and prosperous to the new visir, whose power still increased in Egypt. The Franks formed a siege of Damiata, which, as they had a great train of military engines with them, they carried on, for some time, with extraordinary vigour. However, Saladin, having taken care to furnish the place with a numerous garrison, and to supply it copiously with all kinds of provisions and military stores, the besiegers were obliged to abandon the enterprise, and retire, after they had lain before the town fifty-four days, and sustained a very considerable loss. But, though ill success attended their armies in Egypt, they reduced the castle of Accara in Syria, and loaded the commander with chains. Nuroddin, in order to make a diversion in his favour, besieged Al Carak in Arabia Petræa, though without effect; for a strong body of Franks advancing out of Palestine to the relief of that fortress, he thought fit to decamp, without venturing a battle. About this time, an earthquake made dreadful havock in Syria, Aleppo and several other towns being almost entirely destroyed by the violence of the shocks.

The next year, Monstanjed, the caliph of Bagdad, departed this life; his death was occasioned in the following manner: having commanded his physician to write in his name to the visir, to order him to affix to a gibbet, erected for that purpose, the prefect of the palace, and another officer, the physician, knowing that his master was at the point of death, shewed them the letter. Perceiving their fate, therefore, to be inevitable, if the caliph recovered, they entered his apartment, attended by some of their friends,

Digitized by Google

carried him off by force, and shut him up in a bath, where, in a short time, he expired.

The same day that Al Mostanjed was assassinated, his son Al Mostadi was proclaimed and acknowledged by the officers of the palace, and the chief nobles of the court, to the great joy of the people, who were no strangers to his many virtues: nor were their expectations disappointed; for, like his father, he was eminent for his love of justice; and, in his unbounded charity, even surpassed him. This year Saladin made an irruption into the territories of the Franks, penetrated as far as Askalon and Al Ramla, in Palestine, which, for some time, he blocked up, and then moved towards the frontiers of Egypt. He afterwards besieged Aila, which he took by storm, and gave up to his troops to be plundered. With the last exploit he finished the campaign, and, at the conclusion of it, returned home. The same year proved fatal to the Fatemite empire in Egypt. Nuroddin, who was a great favourer of the Sonnites, having been informed that Saladin was absolute master of the kingdom of Egypt, he ordered him to issue an edict, enjoining an omission of the name of the caliph Al Aded in the public prayers, and requiring the Egyptians to mention, in the room of it, that of Al Mostadi, the caliph of Bagdad. In answer to Nuroddin's letter, Saladin wrote him word, that, as the Egyptians were, for the most part, followers of Ali, he was afraid such a step would occasion an insurrection, and prove extremely prejudicial to his affairs in Egypt. But Nuroddin informed Saladin that his order was peremptory, and that he would be obeyed. The name of Al Aded was A. D. 1170.

Digitized by Google

accordingly omitted, and that of Al Mostadi substituted in the mosques throughout the Egyptian territories, in the time of divine service. The deposed caliph was, however, sick at the time when this resolution took place, and expired without having even heard of it. Al Aded was no sooner dead than Saladin occupied the imperial palace, and took possession of all the immense treasures; among which was a library, which is said to have contained no less than one hundred thousand volumes, bound, and written in the most beautiful manner. These he distributed among as many of the doctors of the law, and other learned men, as had occasion to consult them. Thus ended the empire of the Fatemite caliphs in Africa, after it had continued about two hundred and seventy years. The princes that formed this dynasty were Shiites, who asserted that Abu Taleb was the first lawful caliph and imam, and maintained that the supreme authority, both in spirituals and temporals, belonged to his descendants. They even deduced their origin from Ali himself, and Fatema, the daughter of Mohammed; and, in consequence of these pretensions, assumed the name of Fatemites: they also styled themselves Imamiams, and Imams, intimating that they were descended in a right line from the head of that family which alone supplied the Mahommedan world with true and rightful imams.

They bore an implacable hatred to the caliphs of the house of Al Abbas, whom they considered as intruders and usurpers, and not in the least related to the family of Mohammed. As Nuroddin was a zealous Sonnite, and entertained the highest regard for the caliphs at Bagdad, it

Digitized by Google

is no wonder that the abolition of the caliphate of Egypt should have been his principal object. Besides, he was probably influenced not only by religious, but by political motives; he might imagine that nothing would so much contribute to the humiliation of the Franks, who were then grown formidable, as a re-union of Mussulmen under one common head.

As soon as the news of the abolition of the Fatemite caliphate in Egypt arrived at Bagdad, and it was known that the caliph Al Mostadi was prayed for throughout all the Egyptian provinces, public rejoicings, for several days, were made in that capital. In him were re-united the legitimate power of the Mussulmen sovereign pontiff, by the abolition of the caliphate of the Fatemite caliphs in Egypt. He had no concern in this revolution, which was effected by the conflicts between the nobles, who, aspiring to the sovereignty, endeavoured to acquire a right to it in the sight of the people. By refusing the investiture of the caliph of Bagdad, they themselves ceased to be caliphs. Such was the famous Saladin, who was contemporary with Al Mostadi. Many other chiefs of tribes, generals of armies, warriors, and conquerors, flourished also in his reign. He extricated himself, with singular address, from a dangerous sedition, excited by Kimar, his general, who hated the visir, and had determined to put him to death. On arriving at his house, which he immediately invested by the troops under his command, he found that the visir had escaped, and taken refuge in the caliph's palace. Kimar, persisting in his intention, led on his forces towards the

Digitized by Google

imperial residence, attended by a great concourse of the populace. Al Mostadi appeared on the balcony, and, addressing the multitude, said, "You witness the audacity of Kimar, who has even the temerity to brave me in my palace. As a punishment for his offence, I give you all his treasures." The crowd, hearing that plunder was permitted them, turned eagerly towards Kimar's house, followed by the soldiery, who hastened to defend it. By this expedition, the insurrection was quelled, and the life of the visir saved. Al Mostadi was thirty years old at his death, and had reigned ten.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VIII.

Empire of the Arabs, under the House of Al Abbas, continued.

AL Mostadi's death was no sooner publicly known, than the grandees and principal citizens of Bagdad were prevailed on to take the oath of allegiance to Al Naser, his son. That prince was inaugurated in state, and universally acknowledged caliph. He then sent the patent of investiture, and other ensigns of royalty, to Saladin, constituting him, by those presents, the prime minister. The defeat he had received from the Franks in 573, together with the plague and famine that raged the following year, had prevented him from undertaking any enterprise: but in the year 578 he set out from Al Kahidah for Damascus. Upon his arrival, he was informed, that the Saheb of Al Mawsel had sent an embassy to the Franks, in order to solicit their assistance, and instigate them to a rupture with him. He therefore came to a resolution to chastise that prince for his infraction of the late treaty, and even to make himself master, if possible, of his capital; that the Mussulmen, being united under one chief, might be thereby enabled to act more vigorously against the Franks. The Saheb of Aleppo, having received intelligence of the Sultan's design, and of his great military preparations, dispatched an express to Al Mawsel, to apprise his brother of the storm that was ga- A. D. 1180.

Digitized by Google

thering, and to advise him to put himself into a posture of defence without delay. In the mean time, Saladin, with a numerous army, presented himself before Aleppo, and invested that city. He was, however, after several days spent ineffectually in endeavouring to carry the place, forced to abandon it. Soon after, the city of Ahmed, in Mesopotamia, surrendered to him, after a siege of eight days. He then advanced to Jordan, passed that river, laid Beizan in ashes, drove the Franks out of the field, and formed the siege of Al Carac; but, the place being defended by a numerous garrison, he found himself obliged to abandon the siege, and return to Damascus. He had not been long in that capital, when he commanded his son, Al Thaher, to leave Aleppo, and repair immediately to Damascus. Before the close of this year, embassies came to Saladin from all parts of the world, particularly from Sanjar Shah, the Saheb of Al Jazira, and the prince of Arbel, who desired to be admitted into the number of his confederates and friends; which favour having obtained, they returned to their respective courts.

In a short time after, Saladin assembled both the Syrian and Egyptian forces, in order once more to attempt the reduction of Al Carac. He soon began to batter it with military engines, and attacked it with the utmost vigour. The Franks, receiving advice that the Mussulmen had opened the campaign with the siege of Al Carac, marched to Al Walih, a place not far from that fortress, and there encamped. As Al Carac, in a great measure, cut off the communication between Syria and Egypt, Saladin was determined, at all events, if possible, to carry it;

Digitized by Google

he therefore made the necessary dispositions for an engagement, being resolved, if an opportunity offered, to give them battle; which, however, finding impracticable, he penetrated into Palestine, took several towns, ravaged the neighbouring track, put many of the inhabitants to the sword, and carried a vast number of them into captivity. He also possessed himself of Janin, a little town near the banks of the Jordan, and penetrated to Sebaste, where John the Baptist's body is supposed to have been deposited. Here he released some Mohammedan prisoners, who had been thrown into irons by the Franks, and then returned to Damascus.

The 583d year of the Hegira proved extremely unfortunate, and even almost fatal to the Franks. Saladin advanced, at the head of a body of troops, to Al Carac, in order to block up that place, and protect the caravan of pilgrims going to Mecca. He also sent a large detachment to ravage the district of Acca, and all the adjacent track. The Franks, receiving intelligence of what had happened, and being determined to give Saladin battle, immediately quitted their camp, and advanced towards the Sultan, who, having left a body of troops to keep the citadel blocked up, led his men with the same ardour to meet them half way. Both armies facing each other, a most bloody conflict ensued; but the night preventing victory from declaring on either side, the fight was renewed next morning with greater fury than before: nor could the most vigorous efforts of both armies decide the dispute in less than three days; at the end of which the Mohammedans, animated by despair, and hemmed in on every side

Digitized by Google

by the enemy, and the Jordan, entirely defeated the Franks, and gained a most glorious victory. The saheb of Tripoli, who had been prevailed upon to join the Franks, in open violation of the solemn treaty of alliance he had concluded with the sultan, charged the Mussulmen in front, but was so warmly received, that he soon fled with precipitation; and, being eagerly pursued by a detachment of the Mohammedan forces, all the people that attended him were cut off to a man, and he alone escaped to Tripoli, where he was afterwards seized with a pleurisy, and died. A prodigious number of the Franks were killed in the action and the pursuit. A body of them, however, found means to retire to the top of a neighbouring hill; but, being surrounded by a detachment of the sultan's troops, who set fire to a wood into which they had fled for shelter, and almost dead with thirst, were obliged to surrender at discretion. Some were barbarously butchered by the Mussulmen, and others thrown into irons; among whom was the king of Jerusalem. With such terror were the Franks struck on this occasion, that *one* of Saladin's men took *thirty* of them prisoners, having tied them together with the cord of his tent. After the action, Saladin seated himself in a magnificent tent, erected for that purpose, and placed the king of Jerusalem at his right hand, and Arnold, the saheb of Al Carac, on his left. He then drank to the former of these princes, at that time ready to expire with thirst, and offered him a cup of snow-water, which he thankfully received, and immediately drank to the latter. But here the sultan interrupted him with some warmth, saying, "I will not suffer this rogue

Digitized by Google

to drink, as that, according to the generous custom of the Arabs, would secure to him his life." Then, turning to the saheb of Al Carac, he gave him very opprobrious language, and reproached him with the expedition he had undertaken against the two sacred cities of Mecca and Medina. He likewise accused him of uttering the most virulent language against Mohammed, and of being guilty of a great effusion of blood: notwithstanding which outrages, he told the saheb, he would spare him if he would become a convert to Islamism. This, however, he rejected, and the Sultan immediately drew his scimitar, and struck off his head. The king of Jerusalem, terrified at the sight, expected to meet with the same fate; but Saladin raised his drooping spirits, by assuring him he had nothing to fear, for that it did not become kings to kill their brethren. The Franks being thus overthrown, and totally dispersed, the sultan attacked the city of Tiberias, and took it by capitulation: from thence he moved towards Acca, which, after a short siege, he reduced. Here he found four thousand Mohammedan prisoners in chains, whom he instantly released. From Acca he marched to Tebnin, a fortress of considerable strength on the road to Sidon, which was taken by assault, after it had sustained a siege of six days. About this time, the marquis of Montserrat arrived in a Christian vessel at Acca, not knowing the Mussulmen were in possession of that place: the commandant at Acca might have easily secured the person of this nobleman, but, letting the opportunity slip, the marquis escaped to Tyre, and put himself at the head of the Christian forces assembled in that city, which

Digitized by Google

greatly contributed to the success that attended the arms of the Franks some years afterwards. The next place of strength attacked by Saladin was Askalon, which, after a siege of fourteen days, he made himself master of. About the same time, the troops possessed themselves of several other towns in the same quarter. He then led his army against Jerusalem; the inhabitants of which were allowed to capitulate, and leave the holy city, upon condition that every man should pay the sultan ten dinars, every woman five, and every infant two. Those that paid the stipulated sums were escorted by a detachment of the sultan's troops to Tyre, but the others were thrown into irons. The sultan had no sooner occupied Jerusalem, than some of his men took down a cross, overlaid with gold, from the sacred rock, perhaps Mount Calvary; upon which the Iscariots were rent by such a cry as had never before been heard.

The Franks, who had defended Jerusalem, and the other towns and fortresses taken by Saladin, having retreated to Tyre, formed a very numerous body of troops in that city. This proved not only the preservation of Tyre, but assisted them in the re-establishment of their affairs. They laid siege to Acca, which, although it resisted for a long time, at length capitulated. After the reduction of Acca, the king of England marched, with his army, to besiege Askalon; and the sultan, finding himself not in a condition to make head against the king, who had already taken some of his strong towns, and obliged him to dismantle others, began seriously to think of peace, which was at length concluded between them.

Digitized by Google

The sultan, having now no further occasion for his troops, whom he amply rewarded with lands and possessions, for the fatigue they had sustained in his service, disbanded those that had been sent into quarters of cantonment, and permitted them to occupy the lands that had been assigned them. Receiving advice that the English fleet, having king Richard on board, had sailed for Europe, he proposed to visit all the maritime forces, and then repair to Damascus. Scarcely, however, had he arrived at that city, when he was attacked by a bilious fever, which, in a few days, carried him off. From the beginning of his illness, the sultan had been attended by some religious sheik or other, who was employed in reading portions of the Koran to him; but Jaafar, the iman of the temple, famous for his sanctity, who was called in to assist him in his last moments, coming to a passage of the Koran, in which the divine unity and omniscience were asserted, the prince, who was then at the point of departure, suddenly started up and said, "This is most true." He died a little after the morning prayer was ended, and no sooner was the meridian service over, than the corpse was prepared for interment. Prodigious numbers of people crowded into the castle, to pray for the repose of his soul; and a little before evening prayer, the same day, he was buried in the place where he died.

This great conqueror was, at the time of his death, about fifty-seven years of age; he passed for one of the best and bravest princes, whose actions have been transmitted to posterity by the Mohammedan writers. As a demonstration of his liberality, he gave away to his soldiers and

Digitized by Google

officers no less than twelve thousand horses, whilst he lay in camp in the plains of Acca, besides refunding the money expended on others that were wounded in battle; and only one dinar, and forty-seven dirhems, were found in the treasury after his decease. We are told, that he was likewise a most religious prince; that he observed all the stated times of devotion, though he never prayed alone, but always either in the mosque or the camp. When he had any enterprise in view, before he entered upon it, he constantly implored the divine assistance and protection. He has, however, been blamed for giving no preference to one day above another. To give some sort of idea of his patience, and connivance at the offences of the people about him, it may be remarked, that once a Mameluke throwing a shoe at another, that had almost struck the sultan, he turned his face another way, that he might not be obliged to reprehend the offender. On another occasion, when he had called five times for water, and was still neglected by his attendants, he only said, "O my friends and companions, I am almost dead with thirst." He is said to have erected and endowed colleges and hospitals, and to have built caravansaries for the reception of strangers and travellers, and mosques in the principal cities of his dominions. He generally appeared in a woolen vest, and was extremely temperate, or rather abstemious in his diet. He had an utter aversion to the professors of every religion, and, indeed, of every sect of Mohammedism, except that to which he himself was attached. He held philosophers, poets, and other men of letters, in contempt, but he was an encourager of

Digitized by Google

logicians, metaphysicians, and divines. This disposition endeared him to the bigots of his own sect; one of whom, in deploring the death of his hero, made use of the following terms:—"In the fall of the Sultan fell the best and bravest of men; valour itself expired; munificence was dried up; every species of enmity and injustice gushed out in its room; all the advantages and conveniencies of life were broken off; heaven was covered with thick clouds; the age was deprived of its Phœnix, its only sultan; Mohammedism has lost its firm support."

Saladin was so much regretted by his subjects, of all ranks and denominations, that there was a general mourning for him in every part of his extensive dominions. Al Malec, his eldest son, who succeeded him in Syria, received, for three days, the compliments of condolence in the palace, and then sent advice of his father's decease to his elder brothers, who were in Egypt and Aleppo. Al Malec, to whom the principal officers of the court had taken the oath of allegiance, as his father's successor, a day or two before the sultan expired, forbade the poets to repeat any verses, and the orators and preachers to exercise their eloquence on this melancholy occasion; but his younger brothers, who were then with him, rent the air with their cries and lamentations. A division was made of the most considerable provinces and cities of his empire among the princes of his family, and the chief commanders of his troops were amply rewarded.

Thus we see that the reign of Al Naser is chiefly celebrated for the exploits of Saladin, and also for the part which was taken in the

Digitized by Google

most enthusiastic war which distinguished the crusades. It is likewise remarkable for the irruptions of the Moguls into the Mohammedan dominions, which prepared the way for the conquests of the renowned Jenghis Khan. The 599th year of the Hegira may be given as the date to the commencement of the empire of the Moguls under this prince. He had from his childhood been engaged in the service of Ung or Wang; styled by Arab writers king John, but by European travellers he is called Prester John. Having distinguished himself on several occasions against that prince's enemies, he excited the envy of his principal courtiers; some of whom calumniated him to his sovereign, who, at their instigation, resolved to throw him into irons: of which design, being apprised by two boys, or slaves, he left his tents standing empty, and posted a body of troops in ambuscade, towards the middle of the night, at a small distance from them; which, with Jenghis Khan at their head, rushing out upon a party of the king's soldiers, the next morning entered: they abandoned their tents without opposition, and put the rest to flight. This action happened near a well or fountain called Balciva. Several battles were afterwards fought between them, which proved fatal to the king, and he and his whole family were carried into captivity by the conqueror. The two slaves, to whom he owed his preservation, he honoured in a very particular manner. He enacted a law in their favour, the benefits of which were to extend to their latest posterity; by which they, as well as their descendants, were exempted from all taxes; permitted to enjoy all the plunder they should

Digitized by Google

acquire in the war, without being obliged to resign any part of it to the Khan; and allowed to appear before him without asking leave: and rendered incapable of being punished with death even for capital crimes. The chief of those who had adhered to him he made general officers, and principal lords of his court. As a particular tribe of the Moguls, named Aviratheans, had exerted themselves more than any others of that nation in his favour, he permitted their leading men to contract a perpetual alliance, by intermarriages with his own family. In the mean time, a certain Mogul khan, or emir, called Tubt Taneri, who had spent several days in traversing deserts and mountains, barefoot and naked, in the middle of winter, returned to the victor's camp; protesting, that God had declared to him, "I have given the whole earth to Tamujin and his posterity, and have named him Jenghis Khan." In consequence of which declaration it was, that he assumed the name of Jenghis Khan; and great crowds of people joined him from all quarters. Being now arrived to a superior degree of power, he dispatched messengers to all the Turkish tribes, requiring their submission, and an immediate recognition of his authority. Those who paid a proper regard to this requisition he treated as friends, and the others in a different manner. The four sons, whom he had by the most noble of his wives, he appointed to preside over the affairs of his empire; assigning to each of them a particular department for this purpose. The eldest had the management and direction of every thing relative to hunting, which the Moguls hold in the highest esteem, committed to

Digitized by Google

his care. On the second of these sons was conferred the province of superintending the due execution of the laws, and all judicial matters. The third he placed at the head of administration, and the fourth he constituted generalissimo of his forces.

About this time the Franks or Latins took Constantinople from the Greeks, after they had continued the siege of that city for some time. It is said, upon very respectable authority, that thirty thousand Franks were enabled, by the great extent of that capital, to live in it concealed, who, when their brethren made a general assault, set the town on fire; by which about a fourth part of it was consumed. "The Greeks," adds he, "being, by this accident, employed within the walls in extinguishing the flames, the Franks, without difficulty, entered the place, and slaughtered the miserable inhabitants for three days together; putting to the sword even the bishops, monks, and priests, who came in procession from the church of Saint Sophia, to implore, with crosses and the gospels in their hands." After which massacre, they plundered the church, and proceeded to the election of Baldin, earl of Flanders, who was placed on the Greek imperial throne, and to the division of the territories of the Greeks among the princes of the crusade.

Three merchants of Great Bukharia, carrying a quantity of rich silks, and other valuable commodities, into the territories of the Moguls, one of them, named Ahmed, demanded two hundred and twenty-five dinars for every piece of embroidered cloth, which did not cost him above ten, or at most, twenty dinars. This exorbitant

Digitized by Google

demand so incensed Jenghis Khan, that he said, "This fool seems to imagine that we never saw any fine cloths before he arrived among us." He then ordered the master of the wardrobe to shew him some sumptuous robes sent him as presents, and commanded Ahmed to be imprisoned, for setting so extravagant a price upon his goods. He then sent for the other two merchants, and asked them how they sold their goods? They replied, "they came not thither to sell, but to present them to his majesty, as a mark of their most profound veneration, and attachment to his person." This moderation pleasing Jenghis Khan, he ordered a purse of gold to be paid them for every piece of embroidered cloth; and, when they returned home, he dispatched several officers of the household, attended by a hundred and fifty Mogul merchants, with orders to buy up every thing valuable which could be of use to his empire. Some of these Mogul merchants were Christians, others Pagans, and others Mohammedans; and, that they might meet with a more favourable reception from the governors of Mohammed Khowarazm Shah, they were accompanied by a Mogul ambassador from Jenghis Khan to that prince. This minister carried presents to Sultan Mohammed, and letters of recommendation, importing, that Jenghis Khan desired nothing more than to enter into a new alliance with him for commercial purposes, and to perpetuate that union and friendship which then so happily subsisted between the two sovereigns. The Mogul merchants and ambassadors were, however, no sooner arrived, than they were basely massacred, and all their effects confiscated. The relation

Digitized by Google

of this barbarous action so affected Jenghis Khan, that he could not sleep till he had formed a proper plan of action against the shah of Khowarazm. He fasted and prayed to Almighty God three days and nights, without intermission, on the top of a hill, with his head uncovered, imploring the divine assistance in a most fervent and suppliant manner, against so faithless and perfidious a prince. The third night, a monk, clothed in black, with a staff in his hand, appeared to him in a dream, and promised him success in all his undertakings. He communicated the omen to his wife, who assured him that the monk, whom he had seen, was a bishop, who sometimes used to visit her father, and give him his benedictions. Whereupon Jenghis Khan ordered the bishop to be sent to him, whose face he could not recollect, though the habit was the same with that of the monk whom he had seen in his dream. The bishop told his majesty, that the person seen by him was undoubtedly one of the Christian saints. From this time the conqueror was always kind to Christians; entertained a good opinion of them; and treated them with particular marks of affection and esteem.

In the 614th year of the Hegira, Khowarazm Shah, after the reduction of Gazna, having found among the archives of the city the original patent of investiture sent by the caliph Al Naser to the prince of that city, was so incensed against the Mohammedan pontiff, that he formed a design to depose him. For this purpose, he convoked a general assembly of all the imans and principal doctors of Mohammedism in his dominions, who unanimously declared, that the cali-

Digitized by Google

phate belonged to the descendants of Hosein; that the house of Al Abbas had, for a long time, usurped the supreme authority at Bagdad; and that the members of that house had rendered themselves unworthy of the high dignity they had enjoyed, by the many violations of the Mohammedan peace of which they had been guilty, and the frequent wars they had unjustly excited, among the faithful. They had therefore deposed Al Naser, and elected Al Termedi in his room. The caliph endeavoured to put the city of Bagdad in a posture of defence, imagining that he should soon be obliged to sustain a siege, as he was not able to make head against the sultan's numerous army, which now began to draw near. In the mean time, happily for the caliph, so deep a snow fell in the narrow passages of the mountains, as had never before been known in the memory of man. Those defiles being thus shut up, the Khowarazmian army could neither advance nor retreat; insomuch, that the greatest part of it perished miserably: and the sultan himself, after having been in the most imminent danger, was obliged to return home, and leave all his equipage in the middle of the snow. This misfortune, however, did not induce him to lay aside his design; on the contrary, he was determined to carry it into execution at a more favourable season: but he was constrained to drop all thoughts of undertaking another expedition to Bagdad, by the dreadful irruption of the Moguls into the territories of Khowarazm, under the conduct of Jenghis Khan, who was, at a future time, assisted by the caliph Al Naser.

The persecution of the Christians and Jews still continued in Egypt, large sums of money

Digitized by Google

being levied on them, in order to carry on the war against the Franks. As corn was likewise exceedingly dear, they found themselves so grievously oppressed, that a considerable number undertook, for sustenance, the most servile offices; many of them destroyed themselves in despair, and not a few turned Mohammedans. The merchants were not only deprived of the corn and provisions they had laid up for their own use, but their houses were plundered by the soldiery. These licentious proceedings continued till a peace was concluded between the Mohammedans and the Franks, which happened the following year. Jenghis Khan, with his army of Moguls, besieged the city of Bokhara, then defended by a garrison of twenty thousand men, reduced it, and afterwards laid it in ashes. He likewise sent a detachment of thirty thousand men to pursue Sultan Mohammed, who had fled, by way of the Amu, to the country of Termed, and pushed on his conquests in that prince's territories with surprising rapidity.

Having passed the Jihun, with his numerous forces, Jenghis Khan advanced to the city of Balkh. The principal inhabitants were no sooner informed of their approach, than they hastened to meet him, with many valuable presents, and all kinds of refreshments for his troops; notwithstanding which, he cruelly massacred them all, on account of their attachment to the son of Mohammed Khowarazm Shah. From Balkh, he marched to Talakan, possessed himself of that fortress, slew most of the garrison, and carried the remainder into captivity. He then advanced to Al Bamiyan, formed a siege of that place, and, at last, took it by storm. As

Digitized by Google

his favourite grandson was killed with an arrow during the siege, which was extremely obstinate, he put to the sword all the people he found in the town, without distinction of rank or sex. He did not spare so much as the cattle or beasts of burden belonging to the place; unborn infants he tore from their mothers, and, with savage fury, cut them to pieces: after which barbarities, he entirely destroyed the city, and laid waste the surrounding territories. About this time, the caliph, Al Naser, died at Bagdad, in the 70th year of his age. He is said to have amassed vast riches, which he expended in his pleasures, though he laid out considerable sums in building. He was the first prince who appropriated to himself the succession of all the foreign merchants that died in his dominions. Learning was little esteemed by him, and its possessors shared no part of his donations. He reigned 47 years, almost the whole of which he spent in a state of inactivity. Although this sort of supineness be unfavourable to a monarch's glory, yet it certainly is preferable to the ostentatious successes of ambition, in general, too dearly bought by the nations who covet them.

The caliph Al Naser's decease was no sooner known, than his son, Al Dhaher, was saluted caliph. The old caliph, in his life-time, had caused him to be acknowledged heir-apparent of the crown of Bagdad, and to be prayed for as such in the mosques throughout all the provinces under his jurisdiction; but finding him bold, valiant, hasty, and of an enterprizing disposition, he was afterwards afraid of him, and caused him to be imprisoned, and cast his eyes upon his youngest son as the most proper to succeed him.

Digitized by Google

That prince, however, dying before his father, Al Dhaher was declared the successor. Upon the old monarch's decease, he was therefore taken out of prison, and placed upon the throne. He was fifty years of age, when in exchange for the fetters, which till then had loaded his hands, the sceptre was put into them. He is said on this occasion to have exclaimed, "It is surely too late to open shop towards night? I am now above fifty years old, and shall I at this age be created caliph?" He sat about nine months upon the throne, but in that short time he ordered several of his subjects properties, of which they had been forcibly deprived, to be restored to them. He also remitted an oppressive tax which had been lately imposed, and constructed a new and very large bridge over the Tigris at Bagdad; so that he left behind him the character of an excellent prince, being justly admired by all his people for his love of justice, as well as for the lenity and moderation with which he held the reins of government.

Upon the death of Al Dhaher, his son Al Mostanser was inaugurated. As soon as the principal officers and chief inhabitants of Bagdad had taken the oath of allegiance to him, he appeared in public on horseback. He surpassed all his predecessors in liberality; and in the administration of justice he even exceeded his father himself. He demonstrated the greatest esteem and consideration for the professors of learning: he caused several public edifices to be erected, and among others a famous college, which was superior to any building of the kind throughout the Mussulman empire, both for the beauty and extent of the edifice, the number of

Digitized by Google

students it contained, and the ample revenues assigned it by its founder. He instituted four professorships, one for each sect of Mohammedans. Three hundred pupils were regularly taught, fed, and clothed, and there were likewise a physician and an apothecary at fixed salaries. By means of a gallery communicating with his palace, Mostanser frequently attended the lectures, and heard from behind the blinds the lessons of the doctors. He moreover kept a number of public tables, extremely well served, during the night of the month of Ramadan, when Mussulmen are allowed to eat and drink after the abstinence of the day. As a farther instance of this prince's unbounded liberality, being one day on the highest gallery of his palace, he saw from thence many terraces belonging to the houses of the city adorned with different kinds of habits; upon which he asked his visir, what was the meaning of this appearance? The visir replied, the inhabitants of Bagdad had washed their cloaths, and placed them there to be dried by the sun, on account of the approach of one of their annual feasts. Al Mostanser immediately answered, "I did not think that the inhabitants of Bagdad had been so poor, that they were forced to wash their garments for want of new ones to celebrate their feast in." At the same time he ordered a great sum of money to be converted into cross-bow bullets, which he shot from the gallery of his palace upon all the terraces of the city, where he had seen the habits exposed to the sun. In consequence of this liberal spirit, he in less than twenty years distributed among the people the immense treasures which his predecessors had amassed dur-

Digitized by Google

ing the space of five hundred. On visiting his treasury one day he found a cistern full of gold and silver. "God grant," exclaimed he, "that I may live long enough to expend all this!" to which a courtier who accompanied him replied, "I heard your grandfather, the caliph Naser, speaking of this same cistern when it wanted twelve feet of being full, say, God grant I may live long enough to fill it." Whether his intention of accumulating was to answer any laudable object is unknown; but Mostanser lavished it always in a princely manner, in distributing immense sums to the poor, and in repairing the public schools, mosques, roads, and hospitals, during a reign of near seventeen years.

In the 625th year of the Hegira, Jerusalem, and several other places in the maritime part of Syria, were ceded to the Franks. This cession was only made upon condition that the Mohammedans should be admitted into certain temples; that the city should remain dismantled; and that the court of judicature in the forum should be under the direction of a Mohammedan governor. The Franks had received such large sums of money and supplies of men from Europe, that nothing could withstand their force. In the course of this year Khowarazm Shah undertook the conquest of Georgia or Gurjestans. But the king of that country, who found himself in a condition to sustain the war, took the field with an army much more formidable than that of the Shah's. The latter of these princes, in order the better to reconnoitre the enemy, posted himself on a height from whence he could discover the position of their whole camp. Perceiving that their van was

Digitized by Google

formed of Khozars, a people situated on the northern coast of the Caspian sea, who still retained a grateful sense of the favour he had done them, when he procured them a pardon from his father, after they had rebelled against him, he resolved to attempt to detach them from their ally. For this purpose he sent them bread and salt, in order to put them in mind of the good office he had done them, and the alliance he had contracted with them. This present produced the desired effect, for the Khozars, ashamed of being engaged in a war against their benefactor, abandoned the Georgians, and immediately returned home. After their departure, the sultan gave the king of Georgia to understand, that, notwithstanding the defection of the Khozars, he would grant him a cession of arms for one day, to treat of an accommodation. During this short interval, in which several feats of arms were performed, Khowarazm Shah dismounted successively a valiant Georgian, and three of his sons, and afterwards killed in single combat another of the same nation, of a gigantic size and strength; a sight which struck the Georgian army with terror. The sultan, taking advantage of the panic into which the enemy were thrown, fell upon them with such bravery, that he gained a complete victory, and reduced to obedience the whole kingdom of Gurjestan without striking another stroke. However, having entered Teflis, the capital of that kingdom, he received advice that Borak, governor of the province of Kerman, did not obey his orders. He therefore took a resolution to march directly against him with three hundred horse; hoping by this step to be

Digitized by Google

able to chastise him for his disobedience before it broke out into open rebellion, and before he had put himself in a proper posture of defence. Having accordingly left Teflis, he reached that province with his detachment, before Borak was apprized of his departure, surprised the disaffected governor before he was in a condition to oppose him, and inflicted upon him the punishment due to his temerity and presumption. At this period the authority of Oktay Khan was unanimously recognized at a general assembly of the great lords and princes of that nation. Soon after Khowarazm retired to the province of Diyar Becr, where he gave himself up entirely to wine, gaming, and all kinds of pleasures. Whilst he was immersed in this course of life, his troops were routed by the Mogul's, and at length he himself was obliged to fly from the enemy, who nevertheless came up with him, and taking him and his servants to be common soldiers, they put them all to the sword for the sake of their horses, clothes, and arms. With regard to Khowarazm's grandeur and magnificence, it may not be amiss to observe, that the march of Alexander the Great was beat on twenty-seven drums, set with jewels, before him, at the rising and setting of the sun. The day on which this pompous ceremony commenced, twenty-seven sovereign princes beat the march at his palace. All his utensils were also covered with precious stones. His brothers had likewise marches beat on five drums each, in honour of them, constantly at the stated times of public prayer. That this prince was a general of invincible courage appears from his many exploits.

Digitized by Google

In the 629th year of the Hegira, Al Malec, the saheb of Egypt, received the ambassadors of the emperor Frederic the Second, in Syria, where that monarch himself arrived; by whose intervention a treaty of peace was concluded between the Christians and Mohammedans. By virtue of which treaty, Jerusalem, though entirely demolished, except the church of the resurrection, and a few buildings adjoining to it, with the territory appertaining to it, Bethlem Lydda, Al Ramla, and the whole track extending as far as Yaffa, and Acca, were ceded to the former. At this period Oktay, the grand Khan of the Moguls, reduced to great distress the emperor of the Kin, and entered into a negociation, which terminated in a treaty with the Strong Emperor, then reigning in the southern parts of China.

At this time Al Malec permitted both Jews and Christians in Egypt to ride upon horses and mules; to adorn, repair, and even build as many churches and synagogues as they pleased; to have all their disputes determined in a judicial way, by magistrates professing the same faith; and to enjoy the free exercise of their respective religions, and all the other privileges they could desire, in their utmost extent. One of the Egyptian emirs, having visited the monastery of the valley of Habib, the Monks of which had been wrongfully accused by a renegado, formerly a member of their convent, of defrauding the sultan of the tribute due to him, that emir caused those religious devotees to be whipped, and tortured in a most cruel manner, without making the least enquiry into the affair, and extorted from them no less than six hundred dinars. Al

Digitized by Google

Malec, however, disapproving of this iniquitous conduct, would not receive the money when it was brought by the emir, but ordered him to restore it to the monks, who had been so unjustly deprived of it; nor would the same just prince take a sum of money offered him as a bribe by the friends of one Dawd, an Egyptian priest, to prevail upon him to command the Jacobites to elect him their patriarch. He also refused an equal sum when brought him, on the same account, by the adherents of another person, who then aspired at the Jacobite patriarchate of Alexandria. He declared his intention never to concern himself in the ordination and election of a Jacobite patriarch, but to leave that matter entirely to those to whom it properly belonged; recommending to them, in the strongest terms, peace and unity. But neither the favourable disposition nor salutary advice of the sultan could inspire the Jacobites (who were rent by parties and divisions) with more moderate sentiments, nor induce them to concur, amicably, in their election of a new patriarch; though Al Malec had given his consent, in compliance with their request, that a deacon in the church might be their patriarch, if unanimously elected. The Mogul arms being now employed against the emperor of the Kin, the Mohammedan provinces bordering upon the Grand Khan's frontiers enjoyed some repose.

In the 633d year of the Hegira, the Tartars overran the district of Arbel, and penetrated into that of Nineveh: upon which, the inhabitants retired into their church, where they were surrounded by the Moguls, two of whose principal officers posted themselves at the doors on each

Digitized by Google

side, and invited the people to return to their respective habitations. Notwithstanding which, all those that went out of one of the doors were put to the sword, whilst those who passed out of the others were unmolested. The reason of this extraordinary fact was never known. About the same time, a number of young men, in the districts near the chief monasteries in Egypt, put on the monastic habit, in order to avoid paying the usual taxes. This fraud being discovered, the collectors of the tribute treated the monks themselves with extreme severity ; and, to prevent such impositions for the future, an edict was also issued by the sultan, confining the privileges of monks to those who were regularly received and registered as such. This year, David, or Dawd, was elected patriarch of the Jacobites at Alexandria. He had, ever since the death of John, the last patriarch, aspired to that dignity, and at last, by the influence of bribery, he obtained the office. In conformity to a custom which then prevailed, a monk, on being vested with the supreme ecclesiastical authority, assumed the surname of Cyril. David, at his decease, left behind him a most infamous character.

Mostanser, the caliph of Bagdad, died, after he had nearly completed the seventeenth year of his reign ; he was prudent, just, munificent, and an encourager of learned men, and distributed great sums of money among the poor. He caused his portrait to be impressed on some of his coins, contrary to the custom of the earlier caliphs. He lived a pious and a good life, and the college, which he erected on the eastern

Digitized by Google

bank of the Tigris, is mentioned as a monument of his excellent disposition.

A. D. 1242. The same day that Al Mostanser expired, his son Al Mostasem was inaugurated at Bagdad. He was attached to his pleasures; fond of birds, and entirely under the dominion of women. He was also deficient in point of judgment; had little firmness of mind, and altogether neglected the affairs of government. When he was told that he ought either to pacify the Tartars, by submitting to them, or to meet them with an army in Khorasan, and not suffer them to make themselves masters of the province of Irak, he replied, "Bagdad is sufficient for me; the Tartars will not envy me that city, with its district, if I cede to them all the other provinces, nor will they attack me there, as it is my residence." He was revered as the only lawful caliph and imam, and sole sovereign pontiff of the Mussulmen. Though some princes in Africa and Spain had assumed the title of caliph, yet this was only done with regard to their own immediate subjects. The whole body of the eastern Mohammedans, as well as those of Egypt, acknowledged him alone as rightful successor of Mohammed. He is said to have been the richest, the most powerful, the most respected, and, at the same time, the most unfortunate prince of his race.

It has been remarked that the later caliphs thought only of securing their ease and pleasure; they delegated the affairs of government to their visirs and generals, who, rarely accountable for their conduct, frequently, in a short time, be-

Digitized by Google

came their masters. These degenerate emperors heard, from the inmost recesses of their palaces, the distant roarings of their enemies thundered against their frontiers, still flattering themselves that it would never reach them. The late caliph, however, employed some precautions against the hordes which threatened them; he fortified the walls of Bagdad, and shewed an inclination to repel the foe. At that period Bagdad was the richest city in the universe. Hulaku, general of a Tartan army, having marched his troops through every part of Persia and Babylon which promised any plunder, hovered round that devoted city like a hunter round his prey. It appears that he had intelligence from within. Mostasem was betrayed by his own visir, in whom he placed an unbounded confidence; but this perfidious minister had sworn he would effect his master's ruin, because the prince was averse to the sect professed by the visir. The caliph was covetous and vain; and the visir, knowing his foible, advised him to disband his armies, under the pretence of their being useless, at a time when he was reverenced and beloved by all kings and princes attached to the Mohammedan faith. These fallacious hopes, which Mostasem suffered to blind his judgment, did not stop the progress of Hulaku. The chief nobles went in a body to the caliph, and strongly urged him to quit his wives, his eunuchs, his birds, and, in short, his beloved indolence, and seriously consider the state of affairs. In consequence of these representations, he determined to assemble his army; but the traitor prevailed upon him to abandon the project. "Suppose," said he, "that the Tartars and Moguls should

Digitized by Google

enter the city, the women and children only would be able to dash out their brains with stones from the terraces of their houses." At length, necessity compelled him to attempt a regular defence. The emperor raised troops, and entrusted them to the command of the same traitorous visir. The greater part of them were drowned in the waters of the Euphrates, which Hulaku caused to overflow their camp, and the general escaped almost alone. These tidings being carried to the caliph, he exclaimed, "God be praised! the visir is safe." This unhappy prince clung to these delusive hopes till the Tartars, after several assaults, made themselves masters of the city. On their entering, the caliph presented himself with the vases, containing diamonds and jewellery of inestimable value, amassed by his ancestors for a long period of years. Hulaku immediately distributed them among the principal officers of his army. There never had been a caliph so ostentatious as Mostasem: his pride was excessive. Scarcely could the chiefs of the Mussulman princes even gain access to him; and when, at length, they were admitted, he affected a luxury and magnificence unequalled by any of his predecessors. When he appeared in public, he usually wore a veil, the more effectually to attract the respect of the people, whom he considered as unworthy to look at him. On those occasions, the multitude was so great, that the squares and streets were too narrow to contain them, and the windows and balconies were hired at an exorbitant price to see him pass.—Through those same streets, exposed to the view of the same populace, who, no doubt, hastened to behold this dreadful spectacle, did

Digitized by Google

the cruel Tartar drag the wretched caliph, confined in a leather sack, in which state he expired. He is said to have inflicted on him this humiliating and barbarous tyranny as a punishment for his pride. Several of his sons were slain in the assault, in which he had never once shewn himself; the rest were presented to the conqueror, together with his wives, to the number of seven hundred, and three hundred eunuchs employed in their service: their destiny is unknown. Bagdad was given up to be pillaged during seven days, and in it the troops found immense treasures. Thus fell the last of the caliphs, at the age of forty-six, after a reign of sixteen years.

Mostasem had no proper successor; for Bibas the fourth, sultan of the Turkish Mamelukes in Egypt, acknowledged, for caliph, Al Monstanser; who pretended to be a member of that house three years after the fatal catastrophe; but his authority was not recognized by the most considerable part of the Mohammedan world. The author of the book entitled "Wassaf" relates, that this caliph had caused a stone to be placed at the threshold of the door of his palace, which was as much respected by the Mussulmen as the famous black stone of the temple of Mecca. Over the door there was a piece of black velvet, which hung as low as a man could reach. When the principal lords made their court to the caliph, they stood without the palace, to which they rendered almost divine honours, by rubbing their eyes and forehead upon the velvet and the stone, kissing them with profound humility.

During this reign, Jerusalem, Askelon, and Tiberias, were ceded by the saheb of Damascus to the Franks, in order to procure their assist-

Digitized by Google

ance against the saheb of Egypt. It may not be improper to observe, that the patriarch Cyril's enemies, who had pursued him with so much violence whilst alive, did not desist after his death. Some of them signified to the sultan that he had amassed vast sums of money in an unlawful manner, which ought to be confiscated. Upon which Al Malec ordered Cyril's palace to be sealed up, and afterwards seized upon every thing valuable that it contained, whether the property of the patriarch, or belonging to the churches over which he presided. His two nephews were sent to prison, and put to the torture, to force them to discover where the rest of his treasure was hidden. Two purses, one containing a thousand dinars in gold, and the other the same sum in silver, in consequence of that discovery, were dug up and carried to the sultan, as were also many costly garments; more plate and tapestry, of great price, all which were publicly sold, and the money applied to the sultan's use; so that there scarcely remained, of this patriarch's ill-acquired substance, enough to bury him.

Within the same period, Louis the Ninth, king of France, called Saint Louis by the French writers, landed with a formidable army at Acca; and, after he had refreshed his troops, set sail for Damietta, in Egypt, which the garrison abandoned at his approach. The news of this misfortune reached the ears of Al Malek, the saheb of Egypt, while he was in his camp before Hems, upon which he immediately raised the siege of that city, and began his march for Egypt; in the course of which he was attacked by a gangrene in his thigh, which, ending in a

Digitized by Google

mortification, put a period to his days. However, his life being a short time prolonged by the amputation of his thigh, the fugitives who had fled from Damietta appeared before him; and, after they had given an unsatisfactory account of their conduct, were ordered to be affixed to gibbets. Fifty-four of the emirs or officers who commanded the garrison of Damietta were hung up for their cowardice, with their cloaths and accoutrements just as they were brought before him; and the day following he expired.

He had reigned almost ten years at the time of his decease. This prince is said to have been innocent and inoffensive in his discourse, incapable of thinking intensely, but of so majestic a deportment, that none of his subjects dared speak to him but by way of answer.

The siege of Malatiya must not be forgotten in this period of history; the inhabitants, fearing the Mogul general, refused to admit him and his troops into the town. Having at last starved them to surrender, the lower sort of people opened the gate in the night, by which the enemy entered. Proclamation was then made, that both the Christians and Mohammedans might again apply themselves to their respective professions and calling, in which they would be protected. The governor, however, was imprisoned, and executed in a most degrading manner. A similar punishment was inflicted upon three emirs, and several leading men, who had zealously defended the city. The famine occasioned by this siege was the most dreadful, and such as, perhaps, was never known in that part of the world. During the time of this dreadful calamity it has

Digitized by Google

been asserted, upon good authority, that a company of women at Baldun, one of the dependencies of Malatiya, fed upon the flesh of a corpse; and another woman having baked her own child, and her neighbours being upon the point of pulling her to pieces for so execrable an action, she swore that she had not killed him, but only baked him after he was dead, imagining him then to be much fitter food for her than for worms.

Hulaku, having committed the repairing of the city of Bagdad and the fortifications to the late caliph's prefect, detached Buka Timur with a body of troops to Hella, to make himself master of that place. Buka, having executed Hulaku's orders with regard to Hella, marched from thence to Waset, which he entered with his detachment, staid there a week, and put a multitude of people to death. Al Abbas is reported to have sworn by his Maker, that the caliphate should continue in his family till a conqueror should come from Khorasan; which prediction seems to have been fulfilled in the conquest of Bagdad by Hulaku. After the Tartars had taken that capital, they set it on fire, and put a great number of its inhabitants to the sword. The treasures they found in it were immense; that place, when it was pillaged by the Moguls, being said to have been the richest and most powerful city of the universe.

Before we dismiss the history of the Arabs, it may not be uninteresting to the reader to give some account of this people in more modern times, taken from the most respectable authority, by which the manners and habits of this

Digitized by Google

nation, at the present period, may be compared with what they were, as collected in the foregoing history, several centuries ago.

The Arabians, like the Tartars, live mostly without government, without law, and almost without society. Theft and robbery are authorised by their chiefs. They are inured to labour, and accustom their horses to undergo the greatest fatigue, allowing them to drink but once in twenty-four hours. Their horses are meagre, but swift, and almost indefatigable. These people live in extreme misery. They have neither bread nor wine; neither do they take the trouble of cultivating the ground. In the place of bread they use some wild grain, which they mix and knead with the milk of their cattle. They have flocks of camels, sheep, and goats, which they conduct from place to place, till they find sufficient herbage for them: here they erect their tents, which are made of goat's hair, and live, with their wives and children, till the grass is consumed; they then decamp, and go in quest of another fertile spot. Though their mode of living be hard, and their food extremely simple, the Arabs are strong; their stature is not small, and they are tolerably handsome: but their skin is scorched with the heat of the sun; for most of them go either entirely naked, or covered with a tattered shirt. They paint their arms, their lips, and the most conspicuous parts of their bodies, of a deep blue colour. This paint, which they lay on in small dots, and make it penetrate the flesh, by means of a needle made for the purpose, can never be effaced. Some of them paint a small flower on their cheek, their forehead, or their chin, with the smoke of galls

Digitized by Google

and saffron, which makes a fine black colour. They likewise blacken their eye-brows. Most of the women wear rings of gold and silver, about three inches diameter, in their noses: they are born fair, but their complexions are spoiled by being continually exposed to the sun; the young girls are extremely agreeable, and sing perpetually.

Such are the wandering Arabs, who have no fixed habitations, but, being possessed of large flocks of sheep, and herds of camels and goats, rove from one part of the country to another, where they can find pasture and water for their cattle. These are the people who are frequently dangerous to travellers; but if a traveller be liberal to them, they seldom do him any injury, and will even invite him to partake of their repasts, and are greatly pleased to find him conform to their customs.

Those who are settled, and apply to the cultivation of the earth, to trade, and the mechanic arts, are distinguished for justice, temperance, and humanity: they are extremely civil to strangers, and, though they have the highest veneration for their religion, they never strive to force it upon others; so that a person may travel several hundred miles without any danger of being molested. The Arabs who live in towns are much inferior in number to those who live in tents, and are called Bedouins. Those who are situated near the coast have very frequently rendered themselves formidable at sea: their colours are red, which they display in streamers and pendants at the mast head, and other parts of the ship, which give their fleets a gay appearance.

Climate, government, and education, are the

Digitized by Google

great agents which form and modify the character of nations. To the first of these the Arabs owe their vivacity, and their disposition to indolence; the second is said to increase their laziness, and give them a spirit of duplicity; the third is the cause of a certain gravity, which influences the faculties of their mind, as well as their carriage and exterior aspect.

No two things can differ more than the education of the Arabs from that of the Europeans. The former strive as much to hasten the age of maturity as the latter to retard it. The Arabs are never children; but many Europeans continue children all their life. The boys, in Arabia, remain among the women till the age of five or six, and, during this time, they follow childish amusements; but when they are removed from that scene, they are accustomed to think and speak with gravity, and to pass whole days together in their father's company, at least, if he be not in a condition to retain a preceptor. In consequence of being always under the eyes of persons advanced to maturity, they become pensive and serious even in infancy.

The vivacity of the Arabians makes them fond of company, notwithstanding their disposition to thoughtfulness. They frequent public coffee-houses, and markets; and when the villages lie at too great a distance, the country people meet in the open fields, some to buy or sell, and others to converse, or amuse themselves, as spectators of the busy scene. Artisans travel through the whole week from town to town, and work at their trade in the different markets.

The Arabs are not quarrelsome; but, when any dispute happens to arise among them, they

Digitized by Google

make a great deal of noise. They are soon appeased, and a reconciliation is, at all times, instantly effected, if an indifferent person call upon the disputants to think of God and his Prophet. The inhabitants of the East, in general, strive to master their anger. A boatman, in a passion, complained to the governor of the city of a merchant who would not pay a freight due for the carriage of his goods. The governor always put off hearing him, till some other time. At length, he came and told his case coolly, and the governor immediately did him justice, saying, *I refused to hear you before, because you were intoxicated with anger, the most dangerous of all intoxications.*

Many superstitious observances respecting marriage still prevail in Arabia. The Arabs believe in the virtue of enchantment, and in the art of tying and untying the knots of Fate. The miserable victim of this diabolical art addresses some physician, or old woman who is skilled in sorcery. Marriage is reckoned very honourable in the East; a woman will marry a poor man, or become a second wife to a man already married, rather than remain in a state of celibacy: the men are equally disposed to marry, because their wives, instead of being expensive, are rather profitable to them. Nothing is more uncommon in the East, than an unmarried person, after a certain time of life.

Arabia affords no elegant and splendid apartments for the admiration of the traveller. The houses are built of stone, and have always terrace roofs.

It was formerly the custom of the Arabians to pass their summer nights on the tops of their

Digitized by Google

houses, which were made flat, and divided from each other by walls. This way of sleeping, says an ingenious traveller, we found very agreeable, as by that means we enjoyed the cool air, above the reach of gnats and vapours, with no other covering but the canopy of heaven; which, in different pleasing forms, unavoidably presents itself upon every interruption of rest, when the mind is strongly disposed to contemplation and silence. We could no where discover more beauties in the face of the heavens, nor fewer on the earth, than in our travels, in the night, through the deserts of Arabia, where it is impossible to avoid being struck with the contrast; in which a boundless dreary waste, without mountain or valley, tree or water, or the least variety of colours, offers a tedious sameness to the weary traveller; while he is agreeably relieved by beholding that cheerful, moving picture, which measures his time, directs his course, and lights his way. Hence may, perhaps, be accounted the worship paid by the ancient Arabians to the sun, moon, and stars; their glowing imaginations soon felt the transition from wild admiration to superstitious respect; and the passions were engaged before the judgment was consulted.

The houses occupied by the lower people are small huts, having a round roof, and covered with a certain herb. The poor spread their floors with straw mats, and the rich with fine carpets. No person ever enters a room, without first having put off his shoes. The men of every family always occupy the fore part of the house, and the women the back part. If the apartments of the men are plain, those of the women

Digitized by Google

are most studiously set off with decorations. One room seen by M. Niebuhr, in the house of a man of rank, was wholly covered over with mirrors; the roof, the walls, the doors, the pillars, presented all so many looking-glasses. The floor was set with sofas, and spread with carpets. Arabians, whose circumstances do not admit of their having separate apartments for the females of the family, are careful, whenever they carry a stranger into the house, to enter before him, and cry *Tarick*, *retire*. Upon this notice, given by the master of the house, the women instantly disappear, and even his very best friends see not one of them.

The great often have in their halls basons with *jets d'eau*, to cool the air; the edges of the bason are coated with marble, and the rest of the floor is covered with rich carpets. The Arabians smoke more than the inhabitants of the northern provinces of Asia. A custom peculiar to Arabia is, that persons of opulence and fashion carry always about with them a box, filled with odoriferous wood; a piece of which they put into any person's pipe for whom they wish to express particular respect.

The Arabians spread a large cloth in the middle of the room, upon which they place a small table, only a foot high, and on the table a large round plate of tinned copper. Upon this are set different copper dishes, neatly tinned within and without. They use no knives and forks, but are very dexterous with their fingers. The more eminent people eat nothing but boiled rice, served up in a very large wooden plate. The company sit down and eat, one after another, till the whole contents of the plate are exhausted,

Digitized by Google

or they are satisfied. In the houses of persons of distinction, several of these plates are set, one upon another, in a pyramidical form. When the masters rise, the servants sit down at the same table, and eat up what remains. In some houses, a servant stands in the middle of the company, to set down and remove the dishes which are brought in by other servants. Hardly is a plate set down upon the table, when perhaps sixteen or twenty hands are all at once thrust into it, and it is instantly emptied of its contents. The Arabs repeat always a short prayer before sitting down to a meal, "In the name of the most merciful God." When any one has done eating, he rises without waiting for the rest, and says, "God be praised." They drink little while they eat; but, as they rise from table, after washing, they drink some cold water, and a cup of coffee.

Among the higher Arabians, there is a great variety in the national dresses. Nothing can be more inconvenient or expensive than the head-dress worn by Arabians of fashion. They wear fifteen caps, one over another; some of which are of linen, but the rest of thick cloth, or cotton. That which covers the rest is usually richly embroidered with gold. Over these caps they wrap a large piece of muslin, ornamented at the ends, which flow loose upon the shoulders, with silk or golden fringes. They wear a piece of fine linen upon the shoulder, which is peculiar to the Arabians, and which was probably intended to shelter the wearer from the sun and rain, but is now merely ornamental.

The common class of Arabs wear only two caps: some have drawers, and a shirt; but the

Digitized by Google

greater number have only a piece of linen about their loins, and a piece of cloth upon the shoulders: in other respects, they are naked, having neither shoes nor stockings. In the highlands, where the climate is colder, the people wear sheep-skins. The scanty clothes which they wear through the day, are also their covering by night: the cloth swaddled about the waist serves for a mattress, and the linen garment worn about the loins, is a sheet, to cover the Arab while he sleeps. The highlanders, to secure themselves from insects, sleep in sacks.

Arabia, in its full extent, is computed to be twelve or thirteen hundred miles long, and as many broad. It consists of three grand divisions. That which lies within the tropic is excessively hot, and, in many places, unhealthy, particularly those parts that are situated on the coast of the Red Sea. The winds are also hot and suffocating, and the sands extremely dangerous, being sometimes driven by the winds in such prodigious clouds, that whole caravans have been buried and lost by a single storm.

The pestilential winds of the East are described by various authors under different names; as harmattan, samiel, sirocco, &c. M. de Beauchamp describes a remarkable south wind in the deserts about Bagdad, called seravansum, or poison-wind; it burns the face, impedes perspiration, strips the trees of their leaves, and is said to pass on in a straight line, and often kills people in six hours. The hot wind, or ramsin, seems to blow at the season when the sands of the desert are the hottest; the air is then filled with an extremely subtle dust. These winds blow in all directions from the deserts.

Digitized by Google

The southern part of Arabia, distinguished by the name of Happy, would be considered as having little claim to that title by a stranger traversing its shores; but, should such a one be placed in its middle regions, beneath the balm-dropping woods, and amidst the verdant vales, where the fruits of every climate court the taste, and the breezes of cassia refresh the senses, he would acknowledge that the ancients very justly bestowed on the country that emphatical appellation.

The desert part of Arabia, with equal propriety, bears that name, the soil consisting of an almost boundless level of sand, intersected by sharp and naked mountains, and the face of the desert, without shelter or shade, is scorched by the direct and intense rays of a vertical sun. This desolate country is never refreshed with rain, except sometimes at the equinoxes; and the few hardy vegetables seen in the cleft of the barren rocks, or wildly dispersed on the sandy plains, are shrunk by a perpetual drought; for the dews of the night are, in a manner, rendered insufficient for the purposes of vegetation, by the scorching heat of the sun during the day. The intense cold of the one, and the heat of the other, clearly account for the wise provision of Providence, in spreading over the Israelites a cloud to be a covering by day, and a fire to give light in the night season.

——————Arabia's sands
Lonely, uncomfortable lands!
Void of fountain, void of rain,
Oppose their burning coasts in vain!
See! the great Prophet stand
Waving his wonder-working wand!

Digitized by Google

He strikes the stubborn rock, and lo!
The stubborn rock feels the Almighty blow!
His stony entrails burst, and rushing torrents flow.
BROME'S HABAKKUK paraph.

Though the land appears desolate, yet the surface of the Red Sea, when calm, discovers, in some places, such a diversity of marine vegetables, that they resemble a forest under water; and the traveller has the additional pleasure of beholding a great variety of fishes and shells of the most uncommon and beautiful kinds; but, in passing over the deserts, he is annoyed by swarms of locusts and hornets, and is in some danger from serpents and vipers; but the reptiles of the lizard kind, from the rich variety of their shapes and skins, he views with more safety and pleasure. "Whilst travelling," says Dr. Shaw, "the heavens were every night our covering, a carpet spread on the sand was our bed, and a change of raiment, made into a bundle, served for a pillow. Our camels laid round us in a circle, with their faces looking from us, while their loads and saddles were placed by us, behind them. In this situation, they served as guards or centinels; for they are watchful animals, and awake at the least noise."

Digitized by Google

List of the Caliphs or Successors of Mohammed.

Caliphs.	Began their Reign. Year of the Hegira.	Year of Christ.
The first four Caliphs.		
Abu Becr	11	632
Omar	13	634
Othman	23	644
Ali	35	655
Caliph of the family of Mohammed.		
Hasan, or Al Hasan, the son of Ali and Fatema	40	660
Caliphs of the house of Ommiyah.		
Moawiyah I.	41	661
Yezid I.	60	680
Moawiyah II.	64	684
Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir, not of the house of Ommiyah, is saluted caliph of Mecca.	64	684
Merwan I.	64	684
Abd'almalec	65	684
Al Walid I.	86	705
Soliman	96	715
Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz, or Omar II.	99	718
Yezid II.	101	720
Hesham	105	724
Al Walid II.	125	743
Yezid III.	126	744
Ibrahim	126	744
Merwan II.	127	744
Caliphs of the family of Al Abbas.		
Abu'l Abbas Al Saffah	132	749
Abu Jaafar Al Mansur	136	754
Al Mohdi	158	775
Musa Al Hadi	169	785
Harun Al Rashid	170	786
Al Amin	193	809
Al Mamun	198	813

Digitized by Google

Caliphs.	Began their Reign. Year of the Hegira.	Year of Christ.
Al Motasem, or Al Mo'tasem	218	833
Al Wathec Bi'llah - -	227	842
Al Motawakkel Ala'llah -	232	847
Al Montaser Bi'llah - -	247	861
Al Mosta'in Bi'llah - -	248	862
Al Mo'tazz - - -	252	866
Al Mohtadi Bi'llah - -	255	869
Al Mo'tamed Ala'llah -	256	870
Al Mo'taded Bi'llah - -	279	892
Al Moctafi Bi'llah - -	289	902
Al Moctader Bi'llah - -	295	908
Al Kâher Bi'llah - -	320	932
Al Râdi Bi'llah - -	322	934
Al Mottaki Bi'llah - -	329	941
Al Mostacfi Bi'llah - -	333	944
Al Motí Li'llah - -	334	946
Al Tay' Li'llah - -	363	974
Al Kâder Bi'llah - -	381	991
Al Kâyer Beamri'llah -	422	1031
Al Moktadi Beamri'llah -	467	1075
Al Mostadher Bi'llah -	487	1094
Al Mostarshed Bi'llah -	512	1118
Al Râshid Bi'llah - -	529	1135
Al Moktafi Beamri'llah -	530	1136
Al Mostanjed Bi'llah -	555	1160
Al Mostadi Beamri'llah -	566	1170
Al Nâfer Ledini'llah - -	575	1180
Al Dhâher Bi'llah - -	622	1225
Al Mostanser Bi'llah -	623	1226
Al Mosta'sem Bi'llah -	640	1242

The four first Caliphs - - -	4
Caliph of the family of Mohammed -	1
Caliphs of the house of Ommiyah - -	15
Abd'allah Ebn Zober, saluted caliph at Mecca	1
Caliphs of the family of Al Abbas -	37
Total -	58

Digitized by Google

TABLE of the Months both in the Julian, Solar, and the Arabian Lunar Year, with the Days collected.

		Days of the Months.	Days collected.	In Bissextile.	Arabian months.	Days of the Months.	Days collected.
1	January - -	31	31	31	Al Moharram -	30	30
2	February - -	28	59	60	Safar - - -	29	59
3	March - - -	31	90	91	The Former Rabî	30	89
4	April - - -	30	120	121	The Latter Rabî -	29	118
5	May - - -	31	151	152	The Former Jomâda	30	148
6	June - - -	30	181	182	The Latter Jomâda	29	177
7	July - - -	31	212	213	Rajeb - - -	30	207
8	August - -	31	243	244	Shaabân - -	29	236
9	September - -	30	273	274	Ramadân - -	30	266
10	October - -	31	304	305	Shawâl - -	29	295
11	November - -	30	334	335	Dhu'lkaada - -	30	325
12	December - -	31	365	366	Dhu'lhajja - -	29*	354

* N. B. In the intercalated Arabian years, of which there are 11 in every 30, viz. 2, 5, 7, 10, 13, 15, 18, 21, 24, 26, 29, Dhu'lhajja has 30 days.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IX.

General History of the Turks, and the Empires founded by them in Tartary and the Lower Asia. The Origin of the Country, and different Tribes or Branches of the Turkish Nation; with their public Transactions, till the Destruction of their Empire in Tartary.

TURK is a name known in all languages, from which the Arabs formed the plural Atrak, that is, Turks. There are three traditions concerning the origin of these people; one given by themselves, the other by the Persians and Arabs, and the third by the Chinese. The Turkish historians derived themselves from the son of Japhet. According to Mirkmond, a famous Persian historian, the Turks are derived from Tur, the seventh king of Persia; but, according to Chinese historians, the Huns and the Turks are the same people, who, at different times, went under these different names. The first is, that which they had before the Christian æra; the second, that which a remnant of those Huns, re-established in Tartary, assumed afterwards; and say, that they dwelt in the neighbourhood of the great desert, extending from the country of Korea, in the East, to that of Getes, in the West.

Historians, in general, divide the ancient Turks into two classes, according to their mode of living. Some of their tribes inhabited cities, and, consequently, had permanent dwellings;

Digitized by Google

the rest lived in tents, after the custom of the Arabs. From the latter are descended the Turcomans, the ancestors of the present Ottomans. They believed in one only God, the creator of the heavens and the earth; to whom they sacrificed horses, oxen, and sheep. They held the water, air, and fire, in high respect; and chanted hymns, in honour of the earth. Their priests pretended to the knowledge of future events. The Arabian and Persian authors give but an unfavourable representation of the natural disposition of the Turks, which they describe as gross and brutal; and cite, in support of their assertions, some proverbs little to their praise. In one of their old volumes is a distich, to the following purport: "Although a Turk, or a Tartar, should excel in every branch of the sciences, still will barbarism always remain in the ground-work of his character." They have another proverb in frequent use, viz. "Though a Turk should be a doctor of the Mussulman law, yet one might kill him without scruple." This revengeful aversion was, no doubt, the consequence of the cruel treatment the Persians have so often experienced from that nation during their bloody wars. Nor were the Arabs less oppressed: and we may assert, that the same sentiments prevail among the populace of the present day, who still continue seditious and insolent. These people were always eminent for personal courage; and, in general, those Turks, who have preserved their original character, have a haughty air, and appear formed for martial deeds.

Great Tartary, the place of habitation for various Turkish tribes, or nations, in its greatest

Digitized by Google

extent, is situated between 57 and 160 degrees of longitude, and between the 37th and 55th degrees of north latitude. This vast region is divided into two parts; the one called the Western, and the other the Eastern Tartary: the latter is scarce one fourth so large as the former. Although the lands in Western Tartary, belonging to every nation or tribe, are marked out, and well known to the inhabitants, yet there are few or no cities, towns, or villages, to direct strangers; their several situations or possessions are best distinguished and ascertained by their natural marks or boundaries; such as mountains, rivers, and lakes, with which Western Tartary abounds.

The principal mountain of those which run along the northern borders, is called the Great Mountain; that which makes the southern boundary, is called the Lesser Mountain; and the third great chain is called Mount Altay, lying nearly in the middle, between the Caspian Sea and Eastern Tartary, and extending between the other two, in about the 110th degree of longitude.

The chief deserts or plains are; first, those of Kipjak, in the west, extending many days journey, on the north and north-east, on the Caspian Sea; secondly, those stretching eastward, from Kipjak to Mount Altay; thirdly, that called the Great Kobi, or Sandy Desert, by the Moguls, and Shamo, by the Chinese. It is divided, by ridges or hills, into three or four parts, and extends eastward, from Mount Altay to Eastern Tartary.

Besides the Dnieper, the Don, and the Walga, there are many other principal rivers falling

Digitized by Google

into the Caspian Sea. The principal lakes are, the Kamish, about 484 miles long, and nearly as many broad; the second is the Issikol, a lake of but small extent, but celebrated among the inhabitants for being the place where Turk, their great ancestor, fixed his royal seat.

As to the political state of Western Tartary, it may be observed, that it is entirely possessed by the Mogul nations, under several Khans, whose dominions are named after the people, or the prince who rules over them. The first and chief of these Mogul nations are, the Eluths, nick-named Kalmuks by the Mohammedan Tartars. These are divided under two Khans.

The second nation or branch of the Moguls are, the Kalka, or Halha Moguls; their country extends from Mount Altay, in the east, to the source of the river Kalka. The third branch of the Moguls, properly so called, are those whose territories lie to the south of that of the Kalka's, between them and the great wall of China; to which empire both nations are subject.

Besides these khans (who, with their subjects, are idolaters of the religion of Tibet, or the Dalay Lama,) there are two others in Great Tartary, who possessed that part called Turkestan, situate to the north of Great Bukharia and Karazm, between those countries and the dominions of the Eluths.

It may be questioned whether all the different tribes of people inhabiting Tartary are branches of the Turks; but it seems probable, that there was a particular nation among the ancient Scythians, who went by that name, since the Turks are mentioned by Pliny, who placed them among

Digitized by Google

the nations dwelling in the neighbourhood of the river Tanais and the Palus Mæatis. They are not, however, mentioned by any Greek writer before the middle of the sixth century: and then they are spoken of as being situated towards the east. Both the Romans and the Chinese mention the rise of the Turkish power; and it is worth observing, that they both confirm a very remarkable circumstance in the history of the Moguls, which almost proved them to be the same people with the Turks; viz. their working in iron, in a mountain called Kin; from which an ancient fable may be dated, of the Moguls making a way through that mountain, by melting the iron mines.

The ancient Huns, or Turks, dwelt in tents placed in carts, and removed from place to place for the conveniency of pasture to feed their cattle, which supplied them with both food and clothing. They despised old people, and only esteemed the young, as more proper for war, which was their sole occupation. Their riches consisted in sheep and cattle; but chiefly in the number of captives taken in war. The skulls of their enemies served for drinking-cups, in their principal ceremonies. Once every year, they assembled at the imperial camp, and sacrificed to their ancestors, heaven, the earth, and spirits. Every morning, the emperor adored the rising sun, and, in the evening, the moon. The left hand was the post of honour with these people, as it is at present with the Turks; and, in all their encampments, the emperor's tent was placed towards the north. At his death, they put into the coffin, with his body, his richest habits, and conveyed him to his sepulchre, at-

Digitized by Google

tended by all his family and officers. For the space of one month, they attended on him in the same manner as when living; and the men of valour engaged in tilting, like our knights in the days of chivalry, in their tournaments.

Thus lived the Huns, in the earliest times, under their tanjus or emperors; but their manners changed in process of time. When re-established in Turkestan, they introduced a barbarous custom with regard to their kings. As soon as their grand khan was dead, his son, or nearest relation, was declared emperor; and, to know if his reign would be happy and long, they put a silk cord about his neck, and, after drawing it so tight as to stop respiration, then slackened it; and the first words which he pronounced, when he recovered, were considered as predictions of what was to happen in his reign.

These Huns inhabited Turkestan from the highest antiquity; and it appears, from their history, that afterwards several Chinese also removed into that part of Tartary. After the destruction of their Hegira dynasty, a prince of that family retired thither, with all his people; and, according both to the Chinese and Persian historians, the emperors of the Huns are his descendants. His posterity reigned a long time over the whole nation of the Huns, with a title of Tanju, being the contraction of a word which, in their language, signifies the "Son of Heaven," and often committed hostilities against the Chinese, notwithstanding the treaties of peace and alliances which were made with them.

Under one of these princes, named Pu Ku Tanju, the empire of the Huns began to decline considerably. A terrible famine, which hap-

Digitized by Google

pened among them, proved the forerunner of many other evils. The Chinese, taking advantage of their miserable circumstances, attacked them; but, at their humble entreaty, granted them peace: yet, scarcely were the Chinese retired, when the Eastern Tartars entered their country, and obliged them to remove nearer to the north; but that which was the source of all their evils, and completed the ruin of the empire, was the dissension which crept into the royal family, on the following occasion. Pu Ku Tanju put to death his brother, who was to have been his successor, in order to place his own son on the throne. Hereupon, a prince of the same family, the son of an emperor, concluded that the succession belonged to him; an opinion which had nearly cost him his life; but, being cautioned in time of his danger, he found means to escape, and put himself at the head of certain hordes or tribes, who proclaimed him emperor.

Thus the empire of the Huns was divided into two parts: those of the south, over whom the new monarch reigned; and those of the north, subject to Pu Ku Tanju. It is this division of which the Persian historians make mention; giving to one party the name of Moguls, and to the other that of Tartars.

After this defection, the Northern Huns found the Chinese less disposed to assist them in their calamities than they were before. They were continually opposed by those of the south, who, at length, granted them a peace. They then resolved to carry their arms against China, but there they were opposed by the Huns of the south, who repulsed them with considerable loss. At length the Chinese, always assisted by

Digitized by Google

these, determined utterly to destroy the Huns of the north, which at length they effected, by a great victory in Tartary: to perpetuate the memory of which, an inscription was cut on a mountain in Turkestan, indicating the time when it happened.

The Huns being thus vanquished, some remained in Tartary, and mingled with the tribes who had been brought from the farthest parts of the east to repeople this country; but the major part of them continued to advance towards the west, through the regions to the north of Samarkand, till they reached the Caspian Sea, and parts about Astrakan.

The southern Huns, who remained in their ancient country, preserved their power, till a tribe of the oriental Tartars entirely subdued them, and brought almost the whole extent of Tartary under their dominion. The title borne by their kings was that of khan. The Huns, thus expelled, established several principalities in the Northern China, which were successively destroyed. One of them, whose princes descended from the emperor of the Huns, was defeated by the emperor of the Northern China. Upon this misfortune, the whole family, together with the Huns, retired into a mountain of Tartary. These people, at that time best known by the name of Turks, were employed, according to the Chinese, as well as Mohammedan historians, in forging iron for the service of the khans of the Juijen Tartars, and continued in this manner to support themselves for a certain number of years; that is, till the Juijen came to be attacked by the nations inhabiting to the west of them.

Digitized by Google

Tumwen Khan, at that time chief of the Turks, marched out of the mountain, at the head of these people, and defeated the enemy. Next year, he marched against the Juijen, defeated them, and slew their khan; after which exploit, he caused himself to be called Tumwen Ilkhan: in this manner was established a powerful dominion in Tartary, at that time called the empire of the Turks. To preserve the memory of the origin of this family, they used to assemble every year, and, with much ceremony, hammered a piece of hot iron upon an anvil; a custom which continued to the time of Jenghis Khan, who was descended from this Tumwen Khan; and it is from hence that some of our historians have represented this prince as the son of a blacksmith.

Tumwen Ilkhan, after he had subdued the Juijen, attacked and defeated several other people of Tartary. His sons, excited by their father's example, formed an empire, which extended from the Caspian Sea to Korea; but, as so great a region could not long remain under the dominion of one prince, these Turks divided it into two branches, the eastern and the western, who had each their particular khan. The empire of the latter extended as far as the Sihun, and more than once became formidable to the kings of Persia: the oriental Turks, who inhabited the farther end of Turkestan, were destroyed by the people named Kitan, who came originally from Eastern Tartary. After the destruction of their empire, the Turks formed themselves into small principalities; and every horde had its particular khan.

The posterity of Tumwen Ilkhan dwindled

Digitized by Google

insensibly, and was on the point of being extinguished, or at least of never making any considerable figure again in Tartary, when the famous Jenghis Khan appeared. This is the original of the Turks, according to the Chinese historians.

After what has been said of the early Turks, and their affairs, it would be proper to give some account of the manners and customs of these people; but our memoirs are very defective in such particulars. The Byzantine historians take notice of very few things concerning them, and those only occasionally; as that the Roman ambassadors found their king Disabules under a tent, attended by a coach (or waggon) with two wheels; that it was their custom to shave the beard in token of grief; and that Taxander required this ceremony of the Roman ambassadors, upon the death of his father; that, during the funeral, he ordered four Huns to be brought out of prison, and slain upon the tomb, with the horses of the deceased prince; that they paid public signs of veneration to fire and water, and chanted hymns in honour of the earth; that, however, they adored only one God, creator of the visible world, and sacrificed to him horses, bulls, and sheep: lastly, that their priests pretend to foretel future events. It appears, that the same customs were common to the Moguls, and other inhabitants of Tartary, in the time of Jenghis Khan. The Greek historians say nothing as to the character of the Turks, but, among Arab and Persian authors, the word Turk passes usually for a highwayman, or robber. Hafez, a Persian poet, who lived in the fifteenth century, speaking of some evil, says,

Digitized by Google

that it takes from our hearts all patience, and repose, with as much violence as the Turks or beggars snatch the victuals from a well-furnished table. What is more surprising, we meet with a distich in the Turkish language to this purpose: "Although a Turk or Tartar should excel in all the sciences, yet the barbarian would still be rooted in his nature." It may be seen, in the history of the caliphs of the family of Abbas, to what a degree the blood of the Turks was thought unworthy to be mixed with theirs, when it was proposed to give a princess of that house in marriage to Togrul Bec, first sultan of the Seljak race.

The Arabs and Persians bore a hatred to the Turks for the injuries received from them, for several ages together, not only by their frequent invasions from Tartary, but also by the disturbances they raised in their dominions. Al Motassem, eighth caliph of the Abbas race, and several other princes of Asia, caused a great number of young Turkish slaves, the handsomest who could be procured, to be bought and educated in their courts: these, being formed into troops of militia, not only often rebelled and deposed the caliph, but involving the country in cruel war, committed unheard-of outrages on the inhabitants, as we have already observed.

This is the true foundation of the great animosity which the Arabs and Persians bore the Turks, who, it must be acknowledged, always were a most turbulent and insolent race where they had power, though humble enough where they had none. However, they were not altogether so despicable and brutish as their enemies

Digitized by Google

represent them. The good air and mien of these young slaves pleased the eyes of the Persians, insomuch, that the poet Hafez himself, who had passed so severe a reflection on them, makes the word Turk to signify a handsome man; and was charmed with one of them to such a degree, that, in his divan, he cried out, "If I could but gain the good-will of this Turk, of the city of Shiraz, I would give, for the smallest of his favours, the cities of Samarkand and Bokhara."

Authors divide the Turks into two kinds: with respect to their way of living, some dwelling in towns and fixed habitations; others in the fields, and leading a wandering life, like the Bedwan Arabs: these are called by the Turks Guchgunji Atrac, which implies a roving kind of life, and without fixed dwellings. From these the Turkmans, and even the founder of the Othman family, are descended. The Turks originally, like all the other nations inhabiting Tartary, lived in the fields, under tents, and without any houses but such as were carried on carts; and, we presume, it will be very difficult to prove that ever the Turks lived in towns, or fixed habitations, till such time as they had taken them from their neighbours in the south.

Before we quit the subject, it will be necessary to examine whether the Turks are descended from the ancient Scythians, mentioned by the Greek and Roman authors; whether all the inhabitants of Tartary were either originally Turks, or sprung from one and the same root.

If by Scythians is to be understood not those properly so called, but all the different nations mentioned by Herodotus, Pliny, Ptolemy, and

Digitized by Google

other authors, which, under that common name, inhabited that vast region, it may, without hesitation, be answered, that the present inhabitants are the descendants of the ancient, or rather of such of that people as remained in Tartary, over and above those which might have been destroyed, or migrated into other regions; for not only is there a great conformity in the persons, manners, and customs of both, but no other nation or nations can be assigned, from whence the present possessors of Tartary could proceed. To the south of them live people, as the Persians, Indians, Tibetians, and Chinese, who always dwelt in cities, or fixed habitations; and, consequently, could never be tempted to change their country and manner of living for those of the Scythians, unless compelled by force, of which we meet with no instances in history.

As to the second question, whether all the inhabitants of Tartary are either originally Turks, or sprung from the same root, our opinion is in the negative; for there is no probability that people so extremely different in their make and features as most of the Mohammedan Tartars and the Eluths or Kalmuks are, should proceed from the same stock, any more than fresh and salt water should proceed from the same fountain. It is true, all the inhabitants of Western Tartary speak the same language, or, at least, dialects of it; but might not this happen through constant intercourse, or one power prevailing over the rest, as that of the Turks did in the sixth century, and that of the Moguls in the twelfth? The conquered people generally speak the language of the conquerors, as well as their own, which, by degrees, becomes extinct, as that

Digitized by Google

of the Kopts almost already is in Egypt, where the Arabic prevails; the Celtic in Gaul, where the French takes place; and in England the British, which has been superseded by the English.

However, it must be allowed, that the identity or affinity of languages would go nearly to a certain proof of the identity of nations, as to origin, did they agree in other circumstances; and might also be admitted as a tolerably sure rule in tracing the migrations of people: because the migrating nation cannot receive their language from people of a different language among whom they live; and therefore must be akin to the unmigrating nation whose language happens to be the same with theirs. Thus the language which the Othman Turks speak, though mixed with Persian, Arabic, and even Greek words, demonstrates that they came from Tartary, or are descended from some of the inhabitants of that region known by the name of Turks; although it may not be easy to ascertain the particular tribe or tribes from which they draw their original.

It appears, from the relation already given, both by the Roman and Chinese historians, that the country possessed by the Turks, at their first becoming known in the world, was about the middle of all Tartary, towards Mount Altay, which divides that great region, as it were, into two parts; and that, in a few years, they, from a very inconsiderable beginning, extended their dominion from the river Lyau, in the east, as far westward as the Caspian Sea. Thus, almost the whole of Great Tartary, becoming subject to the Turks, might have taken the name of

Digitized by Google

Turkestan, or Country of the Turks; at least, the oriental writers give that name to all the countries lying north of the river Sihun or Sir, the Jaxartes of the ancients.

The present Turkestan is situated between forty-two and fifty-one degrees of latitude, and between seventy-three and ninety degrees of longitude, reckoning from Ferro, one of the Canary Isles. It is bounded on the north by the Aral Tag, or mountains of eagles, which are accounted mere hills in those parts; on the east by the dominions of the grand khan of the Eluths or Kalmuks; on the south by the river Sir, which separates it from Karazm and Great Bukharia; and on the west by the Caspian Sea and river Yem. It is about six hundred and sixty miles in length from west to east, and five hundred and forty in breadth from south to north.

The country consists generally of vast extended plains, which are very fruitful, and has but few mountains, excepting those just mentioned.

When Turkestan was in its flourishing state, under its own sovereigns, and even till the irruption of Jenghis Khan, it abounded with strong and populous cities. However, these, or most of them, probably were not built by the Turks, who lived mostly in the fields, but by the inhabitants of the country, or the Arabs, from whom they took them. These were situate chiefly on the rivers in the southern parts, especially on the great river Sir, which was its natural common boundary on the side of Great Bukharia.

Four of these cities were, at different periods, the capitals of Turkestan. Many of them still

Digitized by Google

exist, notwithstanding the destruction made by the Moguls under Jenghis Khan; but we are better acquainted with the state of them at that time than we are at present, being furnished with very few modern accounts relating to this part of Asia. Otrar, called by the Arabs Farab, was situated in the most western territory of Turkestan. It was a city of extensive trade between the Turks and the Mohammedans, when the Moguls invaded the dominions of sultan Mohammed.

As this was a place of great importance, the sultan left sixty thousand men with Gayer Khan, the governor, to defend it, who, on the march of Altay and Jagatay, two of Jenghis Khan's sons, with two hundred thousand men, to attack it, retired into the town, and vigorously defended it for five months; but as the place could not hold out much longer, one of his generals advised him to capitulate in time. The governor, being conscious that he had been the sole occasion of the war, rejected the proposal. Hereupon, the general retired in the night, with his ten thousand men, into the camp of the Moguls, who, detesting his treachery, slew them all, and entered the city by the gate out of which they had marched.

Gayer Khan, finding the town taken, retired, with twenty thousand men, into the castle, which being too confined for so great a number, he endeavoured to free himself by continual sallies. These attacks extremely incommoded the enemy for some time; but the princes, redoubling their efforts, took it at last sword in hand, and cut all the garrison to pieces. The governor, perceiving all was lost, retired into

Digitized by Google

his apartment with two men, who being at length killed, and arrows failing, Gayer defended himself for some time with great stones, which his wife supplied him with. At last, he was taken, loaded with chains, and soon after put to death by Jenghis Khan's orders.

CHAPTER X.

The Seljukians of Iran or Persia, and of Kerman.

BESIDES the empire which the Turks established in Tartary, their native country, they founded four great monarchies in the south of Asia. The three first were possessed by the princes of the same family, called Seljuks and Turks, of the same tribe. The fourth by the princes of the family of Othman or Ozman, with their respective followers.

The Seljukians derive their origin from Seljuk, the father of Dekak, chief officer of a prince of a Turkish tribe, who dwelt on the coasts of the Caspian Sea. Seljuk had several children, who became powerful in adherents, and very rich in flocks and lands: he had embraced the Mohammedan faith, and his descendants followed his example. This religion rendered them objects of suspicion to their countrymen of Turkestan; but, on the other hand, it gained them the friendship of the caliphs of Bagdad, who employed them as their guard, and incorporated numerous bodies of them with their armies.

Digitized by Google

About the time that the Seljuk Turks entered Persia, the provinces of Khorasan, Gazna, Persian Irak, and part of India, were under Masud, third sultan of the Gazni race. They sent an express to the sultan, to demand a place of settlement, offering to swear obedience and fidelity to him: but Masud received the ambassador very ill; and, among other severe things, said that he had never heard of the Seljuk family, although he himself was a Turk by descent, and ought to have been well acquainted with all the illustrious houses of that nation. When the Seljukians were told with what contempt the sultan had treated both their ambassador and family, they prepared for war; and while Masud was subduing the provinces of Jorjan and Tabustan, raised some commotions in Khorasan, but remained quiet upon his return.

Although their affairs were not settled, yet the sultan determined to march into India, against the advice of his generals. In his absence they made incursions throughout the country, from Khorasan to Pars, or Persia Proper, with so much success, that they seized the governments of Ray and Ispahan. By this time Masud returned from his Indian expedition to Gazna, and, two years after, set out again for Jorjan. In his way, being informed that the governor of Balk oppressed his subjects, he advanced towards him; but, when he had reached about half way, he turned back against Dawd Seljuk, by whom being defeated, he fled to Gazna, where he put to death many of the Turks who had served under him, because they had misbehaved in the battle.

Masud soon after sent an army against the

Digitized by Google

Seljuk Turks, whom he defeated, and took some prisoners. Not long after this event, Ebn Seljuk dying, his soldiers put themselves under the command of his son, Mohammed, surnamed Togrol Bec, who attacking Masud's army, routed it, and pursued them to Tus, which he besieged and took. This is the first city which fell into the hands of the Seljukians, who assembled there and fortified it. They afterwards subdued Nishabur.

A. D. 1037.

Meanwhile Masud fled into India, where he remained a long time; so that Khorasan being deserted by him, the Seljuks made use of the opportunity, and conquered it. Masud, upon advice of this encroachment, returned from India; but the Seljukians advancing, put him to flight; upon which the caliph, Kayem, recommended to their attention the defence of the country of the Mussulmen. Masud, incensed at this occurrence, marched against them, and was defeated a second time: and thus their empire was established in the year of Christ 1039.

As soon as Togrol Bec was acknowledged king in the city of Nishabur, in the year 429, he sent his brother Jaffar Bec to subdue the city and country of Herat, in the province of Khorasan; which conquest being soon performed, he appointed one of his uncles to govern it. In the mean time he marched in person to Meru, and, having taken it, he made it his royal seat. He afterwards put Khorasan under new regulations, and suppressed the disorders which had reigned in that country for a long time.

The same year Sultan Masud Gazni assembled all his forces to drive the Seljukians out of his dominions; but the two brothers having also

Digitized by Google

collected their troops, after an exceedingly bloody battle, gained so complete a victory, that Masud found he had no farther business in Khorasan.

The oriental authors divide the Seljukians into three dynasties, or races of princes, reigning in the south of Asia, and which were contemporary, not successive; namely, those of Iran, or Persia at large; those of Kerman, a province of Persia; and those of Rum, or Asia Minor. Togrol Bec, first sultan of this dynasty, received the surname or title of the "pillar of faith and religion." Although the Seljuks had gained possession of almost all Khorasan, yet Masud resolved to exert his utmost endeavours to recover it out of their hands. Accordingly, having raised a considerable army, he marched against Togrol Bec, and put him to flight, killing a great number of his men, and taking many prisoners. Next year Togrol Bec returned to Nishabur, from whence Masud fled to Gazna; and then the Seljukians became masters of all Khorasan; on which occasion an incredible multitude of people were slain.

These successes were followed by the patent of investiture sent to the two brothers, Togrol Bec and Jaffar Bec, by the Caliph Kayem, and by the reduction of the provinces of Jorjan and Tabustan, which Togrol Bec undertook, and then subdued all the Persian Irak. Masud, after his retreat to Gazna, raised fresh forces, the command of which he gave to his son Maedud, whom he sent towards Balk, to defend that frontier: then, carrying his blind brother, Mohammed, with him, he marched again into the Indies, where he continued till the winter fol-

Digitized by Google

lowing, and made great progress; but, being obliged to advance towards the city of Balk to defend himself against the Seljukians, who every day increased in power, as he was about to pass the Indus, one of his generals deposed, and afterwards murdered him.

Maedud, his son, who was then at Balk, succeeded him in the kingdoms of Khorasan and India; but the Seljuk Turks in these provinces refusing to acknowledge him, he sent an army against them, which was defeated. On the other side, great numbers of the Turks, breaking out of Turkestan for the sake of plunder, were routed by Maedud's garrisons. By this time, the power of the Seljukians was so well established, that, after the sultan's death, they found it no difficult matter to annex to their other conquests the province of Balk, with all the country of Karazm.

The distractions which had long subsisted at Bagdad, occasioned by the Turkish militia, still continued to afflict that city; when great dissensions arose between the Caliph Kayem's visir and a Turk called Basasiri. This Basasiri was originally a slave to the king of Irak and Bagdad, but, by degrees, rose to be one of the principal commanders under that monarch. Being obliged, on account of this quarrel, to quit Bagdad, he put himself under the protection of Al Montaser, caliph of Egypt, who, supplying him with troops, he became very powerful in Irak Arabia, and at length obtained possession of the country, which he ravaged as far as the imperial city; so that he became a terror both to the Arabs and Persians. He was already prayed for in the pulpits of that province; and, as the

Digitized by Google

caliph had been deprived of all authority by the Buyian princes, in whose hands he was kept so by this rebellion of Basasiri, nothing remained to the prince but the naked title of king of Bagdad.

The caliph being informed that Basasiri designed, the same year, to seize on the imperial castle, wrote to Togrol Bec, who was then in the district of Rey, intreating him to come to his assistance. Basasiri was at Waset, whence some of the soldiers deserting, came to Bagdad, and, having plundered his palace, set it on fire. Togrol Bec arrived at that capital in the month of Ramadan, bringing with him eighteen elephants, and seized upon Malek, the king, for whom prayers were no longer offered. Thus ended the dominion of the Buyians, which had continued one hundred and twenty-seven years; and that of the Seljuks began in the same city where Togrol Bec resided, in the imperial castle.

In the next year, the caliph married Cadija, the sister of Togrol Bec, who gave her a portion of a hundred thousand crowns in gold; and Togrol Bec, having remained between three and four months at Bagdad, marched towards Musol, carrying with him battering-rams, and other engines of war. He went also and besieged Takut, when the cities of Kufa, Waset, and Aynottamri, renouncing their allegiance, caused prayers to be made in the name of Mostanser, caliph of Egypt. A. D. 1056.

The caliph Kayem honoured Togrol Bec with the imperial vest, and crowned him king of Bagdad. He likewise adorned him with the collar and bracelets; appointed him ruler over his court, and ordered money to be coined in his

Digitized by Google

name. Thus the sultanat of Bagdad, or post of emir-al-omra, passed from the house of the Buyahs to that of the Seljuks, and his power was thoroughly established; nor was there any person left, in both the Iraks, to give him the least opposition.

The year following, Togrol Bec marched to Musol, and from thence to Nasibin, with a design to subdue those places. There went with him his brother Ibrahim, whom Basasiri, by his emissaries, excited to revolt, giving him hopes of obtaining the kingdom, and promising him assistance. Ibrahim, upon this, exacting an oath of fidelity from the soldiers, departed, with a great army, to Rey, and rebelled. Togrol Bec marched against his brother Ibrahim, defeated him, and, having taken him prisoner, strangled him with a bow-string. He likewise put to death a great number of Turkmans who had joined him. Having thus re-established his power, he marched to Bagdad, against Basasiri, and sent the caliph his compliments, with five thousand crowns in gold, and six thousand suits of clothes for his wife. As soon as he arrived at Bagdad, his soldiers pillaged that part called Karkha; and, a tent being erected, the caliph remained in it for two days: after which, he went into the city, from whence he had been absent a whole year, accompanied by Togrol Bec, who held the bridle of his mule till he had passed through the stone gate. To reward Togrol's great respect, he gave him the title of Rocnoddin, in these words, "Mount on horseback, you who are the most firm pillar and support of religion."

Some time before this, Basasiri was gone to

Digitized by Google

Waset, and, having collected a large quantity of corn, sent it on board some barks. When he heard what had happened at Bagdad, he advanced to Nomaniya; the sultan sent against him part of his army, following himself with the rest of his forces. Basasiri being killed in the battle, his head was brought to Togrol Bec, who ordered it to be carried on a pike through the streets of Bagdad. Soon after this, Togrol Bec demanded the daughter of Kayem in marriage; but the caliph giving him a denial, it occasioned many messages and threatenings on the part of the sultan, who next year forbad the caliph's officers to meddle with the public money. In consequence of this prohibition, his counsellors advised him to let the sultan have the princess, a measure which he at length consented to, though much against his inclination. On this compliance, Togrol Bec, being greatly rejoiced, revoked the order he had given for seizing the caliph's treasures, and sent him very rich presents.

In 455, the caliph's daughter was conducted to the sultan, who received her with great demonstrations of joy, and bestowed gifts on all those who accompanied her; but six months after, in the same year, Togrol Bec died at Rey, in the capital of Irak, after a prosperous and successful reign of twenty-six years. His arms were victorious over his foreign foes; and he also enjoyed interior peace, domestic union, and respect and esteem from his neighbours. He was amiable, wise, prudent, a great politician, and, notwithstanding his civil and military occupations, which were entirely directed by him,

Digitized by Google

he found time to fulfil all the duties enjoined by religion. He died at the age of seventy.

As Togrol Bec left no children, his nephew, Alp-Arslan, succeeded him, and in his person were united the two kingdoms of Khorasan and Irak, with their dependencies; so that, when he began his reign, he was sole monarch of all the countries between the rivers Jihun and Tigris, that is, of all Persia, in its greatest extent, in the conquest of which he bore a considerable share. The name which this sultan took, after he had embraced Mohammedism, was Mohammed; that of Alp-Arslan, which signifies, in the Turkish language, the "courageous lion," is a surname. At the beginning of his reign, he condemned to death Kandari, visir to Togrol Bec, for abuses committed by him during his uncle's life; and raised to that employment Al Molk, who was the greatest man in his time, and had administered the affairs of the kingdom with the greatest integrity.

At the beginning of this reign, Alp-Arslan made war against his cousin Kotolmish, who rebelled against him in the province of Damegan; but this revolt was soon suppressed, by an unexpected accident: for Kotolmish advancing at the head of his troops, to give the sultan battle, his horse suddenly fell under him, and, throwing his rider, broke his neck; upon which, his armies submitted, and were pardoned.

This war was no sooner terminated, than Kara Arslan raised new disturbances in Pars and Kerman. The sultan, to suppress this rebel, employed Fadlhavich, one of his most valiant commanders, who defeated him, and was rewarded for his service with the government of Pars.

Digitized by Google

But this ambitious governor, as soon as he saw the sultan march to Khorasan, resolved to seize his province. In order to effect this purpose, he fortified a castle, situated in a very advantageous place, where he retired with a fine body of troops, and a great deal of money, which he had amassed by a thousand extortions in his government. Nezam Al Molk received orders from his prince to attack this castle, and bring him, the traitor, alive or dead. All who had a knowledge of the palace advised him against this siege, because they deemed it impregnable: but the visir, resolving to gratify his master, invested the castle with his forces, and went himself round it to reconnoitre.

During this tour, he did not observe one man of the besieged upon the ramparts; a circumstance which, indicating the greatest confidence of their security, he was so mortified, that, but for the disgrace, he would instantly have raised the siege. However, he resolved to do his utmost, and had already collected provisions and stores for a whole year's blockade; when, one morning, at break of day, he was surprised to hear that the governor desired to capitulate.

The joy occasioned by this incident induced him to grant them honourable conditions; the chief of which was, that the governor should remain in the place, doing homage to the sultan, and paying him a certain tribute annually, besides the usual presents. When matters were settled, the visir, who was in pain to know what could have obliged Fadlhavich to make such a sudden surrender, was informed by one of the besieged, that it was owing to a failure of the springs, which were very numerous in the place.

Digitized by Google

An attempt having been made to dispossess the sultan of the province of Kerman, he marched thither with his army: being obliged to pass through the great desert of Nubandijan, which separates that province from Khorasan, his troops who had entered it with great reluctance, perceiving their provisions to fail daily, began to murmur, and were upon the point of revolting, when they came to an old ruined castle, which seemed to be the retreat of owls and wild beasts; but, on examining it, they found corn enough to supply the whole army. Yet this plenty being of no use without drink, God, to complete the miracle, (as our author asserts) sent so heavy a rain, that every body had water enough to serve his occasions.

A. D. 1064. The sultan marched against Khazan, who had revolted in the country of Khowarazm, and, having routed his army, he bestowed the government of that province on Malec Shah, his eldest son. In his return from this expedition, through Khorasan, he paid a visit to the sepulchre of Ali Riza, the eighth imam, who was buried at Tus, where a great resort of people were continually assembled for purposes of devotion.

After he had performed this pilgrimage, he took the road of Rade Kan, where he encamped with his army in a most agreeable place. From hence he dispatched couriers through all the provinces of his empire, to summon the governors and great lords to a general assembly of the estates. These being all assembled, he declared his son, Malec Shah, for his successor, and only heir to his dominions. Then he ordered his son to sit on a throne of gold prepared for that pur-

Digitized by Google

pose, and made all the officers of the empire take an oath of fidelity to him.

Immediately after this ceremony he acquainted all the chiefs and generals of his armies that he designed to attempt the conquest of Turkestan, the country whence he drew his original, and where, as he pretended, his ancestors formerly reigned; but this expedition was not undertaken till several years after.

The Turks, understanding that the Roman empire was governed by a woman, invaded Mesopotamia, Cilicia, and Cappadocia, destroying all with fire and sword. The empress was not in a condition to oppose them, the greater part of her army having been disbanded in her husband's life-time, and the troops which were still on foot being on discipline, and altogether unfit for service. Eudosia, therefore, to secure at once the empire from foreign, and herself from domestic enemies, married Romanus Diogenes, who was thereupon proclaimed emperor. As he was a man of great activity and experience in war, he no sooner saw himself vested with the sovereign power, than, taking upon him the command of the army, he passed over into Asia, where, on his arrival, he was informed that the Turks, having surprized and plundered the city of Neacæsarea, were retiring with a rich booty. The emperor following them, at the head of a chosen body of light-armed troops, came up with them on the third day, killed a great number of the enemy, and recovered the spoil. He then pursued his march to Aleppo, which he retook, together with Hierapolis, where he built a strong castle.

Digitized by Google

An attempt having been made to dispossess the sultan of the province of Kerman, he marched thither with his army: being obliged to pass through the great desert of *Nabandijan*, which separates that province *from Khorasan*, his troops who had entered it with great reluctance, perceiving their provisions to fail daily, began to murmur, and were upon the point of revolting, when they came to an old ruined castle, which seemed to be the retreat of owls and wild beasts; but, on examining it, they found corn enough to supply the whole army. Yet this plenty being of no use without drink, God, to complete the miracle, (as our author asserts) sent so heavy a rain, that every body had water enough to serve his occasions.

A. D. 1084. The sultan marched against *Khazan*, who had revolted in the country of Khowarezm, and, having routed his army, he bestowed the government of that province on Malec Shah his eldest son. *In his return from* this expedition *through Khorasan*, he paid a visit to the sepulchre of *Ali Riza*, the eighth imam, who was buried at Tus, where a great resort of people were continually assembled for purposes of devotion.

After he had performed this pilgrimage, he took the road of Rade Kan, where he encamped with his army in a most agreeable place. From hence he dispatched couriers through all the provinces of his empire, to summon the governors and great lords to a general assembly of the estates. These being all assembled, he declared his son Malec Shah, for his successor, and only heir to his dominions. Then he ordered his son to sit on a throne of gold prepared for that pur-

Digitized by Google

e officers of the
him.
this ceremony h
generals of his
pt the conquest
nce he drew hi
etended, his an
this expedition w
ears after.
rstanding that t
by a woman, in
nd Cappadocia,
rd. The empre
pose them, the g
been disbanded i
the troops which
ciplne, and altog
sia, therefore, to
rm foreign, and he
married Romanus
proclaimed em
reat activity and ex
saw himself veste
than, taking upo
army, he passed ov
rival, he was inform
surprized and plunde
were retiring with
throwing them, at t
armed troo
day, killed
recovered t
to Aleppo
apolis, w

Digitized by Google

On his return, he defeated a numerous body of Turks, who attempted to cut off his retreat; after which defeat, the Turks abandoned several cities on his approach. Alp-Arslan marched to Akhlat, with forty thousand horse, to meet the Romans, who had a great army; but they were defeated; and their general, who was a nobleman, being taken, the sultan ordered his nose to be cut off.

A. D. 1070.

In the following spring, the emperor marched again into Asia, at the head of a considerable army. But, contrary to the advice of Nicephorus Bryenneus, who exhorted him to wait for the Turks in Cappadocia, he marched to Mazekerta, and, dividing his army into two parts, one of which he sent to a small town belonging to the Turks, between whom and the Romans several skirmishes happened; in one of which Basilacus, the emperor's chief officer, was killed. At length, Romanus, resolving to come to a general engagement, advanced with his army, in three bodies, of which he commanded the centre.

When the armies were in sight, the sultan sent to the emperor to desire peace; but his answer was, that he would come to no accommodation, unless the city of Rey was surrendered. The sultan, provoked at this arrogance, on Friday afternoon put up prayers to God with tears in his eyes, in the presence of his army, who wept to see their monarch's distress. Before he engaged, he gave those leave to return who were afraid to stay. Then, casting away his bow and arrows, he took his sword, with an iron sceptre, grasping his horse's tail in his hand, and all his soldiers followed his example. He dressed in

Digitized by Google

white, sprinkled himself with perfumes. "If I am slain," said he, "this will serve me for a winding-sheet."

After a bloody battle, the Greeks were put to flight, and a multitude of them killed: their emperor was taken prisoner by a slave named Shadi, and being discovered by the ambassador, Shadi, alighting off his horse, paid him reverence, and then brought him to Alp-Arslan. The sultan, patting him three times with his hand, said, "Did I not send to you proposals of peace, and you would not hearken to me?" The emperor replied, "Do not reproach me, and do what you think proper:" then asked the sultan, "What would you have done to me if I had fallen into your hands?" "I should have inflicted some kind of disgraceful punishment on you," answered the emperor. "And what," said the sultan, "do you think I shall do to you?" "Either put me to death," replied Romanus, "carry me through your dominions for a spectacle to your subjects, or else, which is beyond my hopes, spare me on payment of a ransom, and appoint me your deputy." "This last is the way," said the sultan, "that I intend to deal with you." Accordingly, he set him at liberty, on condition of paying him a million of crowns in gold, and dismissing all the Mohammedan prisoners in his empire. When matters were thus concluded, the sultan made the emperor sit on the throne with him: then caused a tent to be erected for his use, sending him ten thousand crowns for his subsistence. He likewise released many Roman lords, presenting them, as well as the emperor, with vests, by

Digitized by Google

way of honour. At parting, he sent an army to escort him to a place of safety.

After this signal victory, Alp-Arslan marched into Georgia, which having conquered, he deprived the great lords of their liberty, and obliged them to wear iron rings in their ears as a mark of slavery, to avoid which ignominy many of them turned Mohammedans.

The sultan made preparations for the conquest of Turkestan. When he reached the Jihun, he laid a bridge over that river for the passage of his army, which, being very numerous, was twenty days in passing. He attacked Barzam, in which Kothual commanded. This governor defended the place vigorously for several days, which Alp-Arslan expected to have taken on the first onset: on its surrendering, he reproached him, in the most opprobrious language, for his temerity in having dared to oppose such forces as his. The prisoner, who, instead of insult, expected praise, answered him haughtily. The sultan sentenced him to be fastened to four stakes, and there left to expire in torture. Kothual, instantly drawing a long knife from his boot, exclaimed, "Infamous man! is this the treatment which my conduct merits?" and attempted to rush towards the prince. Alp-Arslan, who was a very expert archer, ordered his guards to let him advance, at the same time aimed an arrow at him, which missed him. Kothual sprung on him, gave him a mortal wound, and was himself immediately massacred.

Finding his dissolution near, he thus addressed his surrounding friends: "This day brings to my remembrance two excellent admonitions

Digitized by Google

I formerly received from a wise old man, who was my preceptor: the first was, never to despise any one; the second, never to have too good an opinion of oneself. In the two last days of my life, I have transgressed against these two excellent precepts, and am justly punished in consequence. Yesterday, while reviewing my troops, I thought no human force capable of opposing, nor any mortal daring enough to attack me. To-day, while commanding my guards not to stop a man approaching me with a naked weapon, I imagined I had strength and address enough to defend myself alone; but I now perceive that neither strength nor skill can overcome destiny." His body was interred in a town called Maru, and the following simple epitaph inscribed on his tomb: "All you who have seen the grandeur of Alp-Arslan ascending to the clouds, visit Maru, and you will behold him buried in the dust. He lived forty-four years, of which he reigned nine."

He was very brave and liberal; just, patient, witty, and sincere; constant in prayer, and giving alms: he greatly feared God, and was a strenuous advocate for Mohammedism. His shape and mien were so very engaging, that he gained the respect and affection of all who approached him. He had very long whiskers, and wore commonly a high turban, made in the form of a crown. His power was so great in Asia, that there have been seen at the foot of his throne, thousands of princes, or sons of princes, paying their court to him.

The most famous siege undertaken by this prince was that of a place, called in the Persian language, "the dwelling of Mary;" on account

Digitized by Google

of a monastery and church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, situated in the middle of a lake. Malec Shah chose for the attack the best of the troops, whom he put into boats, with ladders and grappling irons for scaling the walls: but just when they were going to make the assault, there arose so furious a storm on the lake, and the sky was darkened to such a degree, that nothing could be done. This storm was followed by so violent an earthquake, that both the besiegers and the besieged, Turks and Christians, expected to be swallowed up together. However, the latter suffered most by it, for part of their walls falling into the lake, when the elements were settled again, the Turks without any difficulty forced the place and ruined the monastery.

A. D. 1072. Alp-Arslan was no sooner dead, than Malec Shah, one of his sons, was acknowledged heir and successor of his father, at the head of the armies which he had commanded. The caliph also sent him the confirmation of the title and power of sultan; adding to this honour the quality of "commander of the faithful," which till then the caliphs had reserved to themselves, without conferring it on any Mohammedan prince whatsoever.

Soon after he ascended the throne, Marubil and Kaderd, his uncles, rebelled against him. The latter was governor of the province of Kirman, and advanced with a considerable force, even as far as Kurj, or Gurj. The sultan sent the troops of Khorasan, which had always been victorious in his father's reign, to oppose him. The two armies, after harassing each other for three days and nights, came to a general engagement, which proved one of the most bloody that

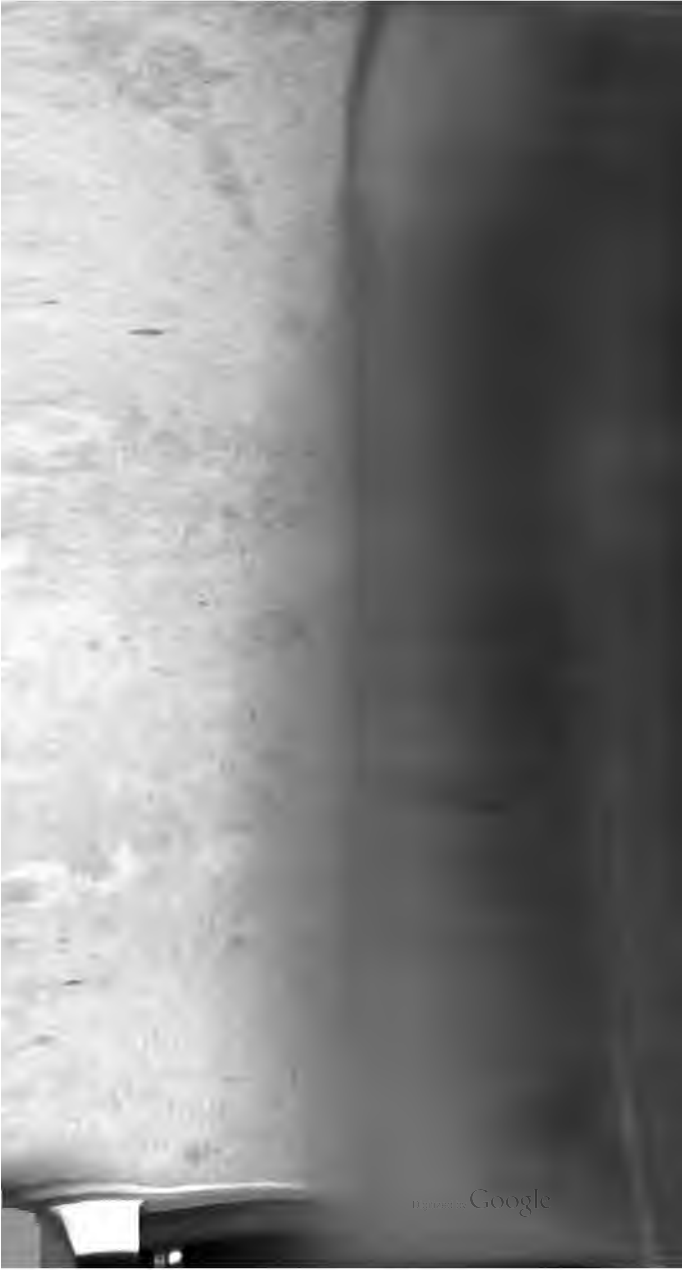
Digitized by Google

ever happened in Persia. At length the victory declared in favour of Malec Shah; and Kaderd being taken prisoner, was sent under a strong guard to a castle in Khorasan. On this signal success, which established the new sultan's authority, the troops became so insolent, that their principal commanders insisted on having their pay doubled, threatening otherwise to set Kaderd on the throne.

Malec Shah, perceiving that the name of a competitor was sufficient to give occasion to his troops to revolt, caused Kaderd to be poisoned the same night in prison. Next morning, when the officers of the army came to know the sultan's answer, the visir, who probably had a hand in what was done, told them, that he had not been able as yet to present their petition to the sultan, because he found him overwhelmed with grief the night before, on the unexpected death of his uncle, who, driven to despair, had taken poison when he carried in one of his rings. This answer at once stopped the mouths of the officers and the whole army; for they talked no more of the augmentation of pay when they found the person was dead who only could have favoured their mutiny.

After Malec Shah had appeased the revolts in different parts of his dominions, he returned into Turkestan, the original abode of his ancestors, and annexed it to the empire as an inheritance which ought never to have separated from it. But a small territory, confined to the corner of the Persian Irak, eluded all his attempts to subjugate it. The principle of fanaticism which at this period actuated the Bethanians, is uncertain; but life was of no value in their esteem,

Digitized by Google


Digitized by Google

he good.
calendar,
bissextile

avelling ;
our of his
t least ten
Mecca with
abolishing
s paid, he
towns in
number of
water to be
He likewise
be carried,
d distributed
with unparal-

on was hunt-
nd horses for
in which he
said, that for
elf, he gave a
it happened
ny. In short,
have been the
dians ; whether
xtent of his do-
liberality, and

sons, Barkiarok,
Mahmud, which
successor, though
old. This mea-
nagement of his
an's death, carried

Digitized by Google

and they exposed themselves to death not only in executing the orders of their chief, but for any indifferent person who wished to be rid of an enemy.

A. D. 1090. The Bethanians began to subdue castles in Persian Irak. They first seized upon Rudbar, which belonged to Kamak, a subject to Malec Shah; and was delivered to Hassan for twelve hundred crowns by the governor, who turned Batanist. Hassan afterwards going to Egypt, met with a Batanist, who brought him over to their persuasion, and, by consent of the people, made him grand master, and head of the sect. He had many followers, and, growing considerable, Malec Shah sent him a threatening message, requiring his obedience. The consequence of this message we have already related in the history of the Arabs. Malec Shah proceeded to Bagdad, where, being arrived, he went a hunting, on the third of Shawal, and, eating some of the flesh of the game, returned sick, of which he died in a few days.

This prince was handsome in his person, uncorrupt in his morals, prudent, liberal, valiant; and eminent for his mental acquirements, his justice, and piety. He diminished the taxes, redressed various grievances, repaired the bridges, public roads, and canals, and built a superb mosque at Bagdad, because it was the residence of the caliph, whose lieutenants the Seljukians called themselves, though in reality their power was superior to his. The sultan's capital was Ispahan, where he died at the age of thirty-seven, after a reign of twenty years, leaving the reputation of a generous and munificent prince, the

Digitized by Google

terror of the vicious, and protector of the good. He loved the sciences, reformed the calendar, and invented the intercalation of the bissextile year.

This sultan took great delight in travelling; and it is reported that he made the tour of his dominions, though so very extensive, at least ten times. He made the pilgrimage to Mecca with an incredible expence: for, besides abolishing the usual tribute which the pilgrims paid, he laid out very great sums in building towns in the desert, where he ordered a great number of wells and cisterns to be made, and water to be conveyed to them from all parts. He likewise commanded plenty of provisions to be carried, for subsistence of the pilgrims; and distributed immense sums among the poor with unparalleled liberality.

But Malec Shah's greatest passion was hunting. He kept forty-seven thousand horses for his ordinary guard, and the chase, in which he spent a great deal of time. It is said, that for every beast which he killed himself, he gave a piece of gold to the poor: and it happened sometimes that he slew a great many. In short, Malec Shah is acknowledged to have been the greatest prince among the Seljukians; whether we consider his conquests, the extent of his dominions, or his magnificence, liberality, and other virtues.

A. D. 1092. Malec Shah left four sons, Barkiarok, Mohammed, Sanjar, and Mahmud, which last he appointed for his successor, though but five years and ten months old. This measure was effected by the management of his wife, who, concealing the sultan's death, carried

Digitized by Google

his corpse out of Bagdad ; and, by distributing money, prevailed on the army to take the oath to her son. The caliph also ordered his name to be published in the pulpits ; and sending him the ensigns of investiture, he was clothed with the sultan's vest, the crown put on his head, and the sword girt on his side. On this occasion it is observed, that never prince so young behaved with a better grace ; and that, after the caliph's visir, who performed the ceremony, had made him his master's compliments, he returned thanks for the favours received in a very polite manner. As soon as the ceremony was over, the sultan went to Nahrawan and encamped.

While Mahmud was crowned at Bagdad, Barkiarok was acknowledged for legal successor at Ispahan, where he then resided ; with whom many joined, as being the eldest son of Malec Shah, and because he was thought more capable of governing the state than a child and a woman.

Turkan Khatun, who was a woman of great spirit as well as understanding, marched thither from Mahrawan with such diligence, that she surprised him in that city, which she took ; but some domestics of the late Nezam Al Molk found means to effect his escape out of his mother-in-law's hands, and he retired to Shiraz.

That prince not only gave him protection, but conducted him to Rey, one of the capitals of Irak, where he caused him to be acknowledged the rightful successor. At the same time the sultana caused her son Mahmud to be crowned at Ispahan, the other capital, and sent troops to pursue Barkiarok ; but many of them deserting to his standard, he defeated the rest. Among the prisoners taken on this occasion was

Digitized by Google

Tajol Molk Kiami, who, being brought to the sultan, the friends of his predecessor slew him. He was a Persian, endowed with many virtues, and excellencies of every kind.

After this success, Barkiarok marched to Ispahan, and besieged his brother with an army of twenty thousand men. Turkan Katun, finding the people ready to revolt, came to an accommodation; by which Mahmud and she were left in possession of Ispahan and its dependencies, on condition he divided with Barkiarok the treasure of his father which was in that city.

The sultan, having received for his share five hundred thousand dinars in gold, raised the siege, and turned his arms towards Hasnadan, where one of his uncles, named Ismael, commanded, who, allured by the sultana with hopes of marriage, had made war upon his nephew. The two armies, which were pretty equal, met near that city; where, after an obstinate battle, Ismael was defeated and slain. The same year Takash Shah, son of Arslan Shah, another of Barkiarok's uncles, declared war against him; and having a much greater force, obliged him to retire towards Ispahan, where he was very kindly received by his brother sultan, Mahmud, whose mother then was dead.

Those of Mahmud's party, judging that the opportunity of advancing his affairs ought not to be neglected, seized his brother; and it is said orders were actually given to deprive him of sight, when Mahmud, being taken with the small-pox, died in a few days. Barkiarok was immediately set at liberty, and saluted emperor by the very people who just before would have

Digitized by Google

assassinated him. Being by this unexpected accident seated a second time on the throne, he chose for his visir, or prime minister, Mowiad; but, in a little time, through some distrust, the sultan dismissed him, and put his brother, Takr Al Molk, in his place.

Barkiarok, marching to Bagdad, had his name mentioned in the pulpits. Having settled his affairs, he applied himself entirely to war. His first expedition was against Takash, his cousin-german, who some time before had driven him to great extremity; and, after several battles fought between them, Takash was at length slain. He then marched into Khorasan, where Arslan Shah, the father of Takash, who commanded in that province, had a considerable body of troops; but he was delivered from his enemy by another of his sons, who committed that parricide in order to seize his father's government: yet he was disappointed; for Barkiarok, being thus become master of his dominions, gave it to his brother Sarjar, and returned to Irak.

Barkiarok, whose reign was a series of rebellions, was no sooner freed from one sedition, but another arose. Mowiad, from the time of his being turned out of the visirship, did his utmost to revenge his disgrace, by fomenting new troubles. He began by exciting Anzar to revolt, who was formerly slave to Malec Shah, and had great influence in the province of Irak. He enabled him to set a considerable army on foot; and Anzar might have given the sultan much trouble, if he had not been taken off by an assassin, in the city of Sawa, where he was already advanced to give his sovereign battle.

Digitized by Google

Mowiad afterwards applied himself to Mohammed, brother of Barkiarok, who had given him but a small share of his father's dominions, in the province of Adherbijan, and never ceased urging him till he had taken up arms against his brother.

This prince disputed the sovereignty with his brother; and though he had only a small army at first, yet it soon became formidable, by the great credit and influence which Mowiad acquired. At this time the lords of the court, being incensed against Al Molk Kiami, superintendant of the finances, by whose frugal management they found their salaries curtailed, attacked his house, and obliged him to fly for refuge to the sultan. The sultan, refusing to deliver him up, they took the palace by assault, and cutting Kiami in pieces, would have treated Barkiarok in the same manner, if he had not escaped by a back door, abandoning Irak to his brother.

Mohammed, thus possessed of a great dominion without striking a stroke, made Mowiad Al Molk his visir, and sent an ambassador to Bagdad to get his name mentioned in kotbah, or oration made in the pulpits on Fridays: but Barkiarok had it suppressed. Then assembling a great army, he marched to meet Mohammed, who defeated him at Mahdan, Barkiarok escaping with only fifty horse. Quitting Rey, he fled to Khuzestan, where Ayyaz, formerly slave to Malec Shah, ruled with almost absolute power, by whose assistance the sultan found himself soon at the head of a formidable army, with which he defeated Mohammed's forces in several engagements.

They fought another battle; but as Barkiarok

Digitized by Google

had fifty thousand troops, and Mohammed only fifteen thousand, the latter was put to flight. Hereupon, taking his way to Khorazan to seek support from king Sinjar, he halted at Jorjan. Here Sinjar coming to him with his forces, they went to Damegan, where the army laid waste the country to such a degree, that the inhabitants, for want of food, ate one another. Afterwards marching against Barkiarok, they were put to flight: and their mother being made captive, was exchanged for the prisoners taken before Sinjar.

Next year Sultan Barkiarok besieged Mohammed in Ispahan, but was obliged to depart for want of forage and provisions. Mohammed hereupon raised troops, and met his brother; but being defeated, was obliged to fly into Armenia.

It is observable, that the kotbah was exchanged at Bagdad, in the names of those two sultans, as often as they had the advantage over each other. Of such great importance was that ceremony thought to be by the Mohammedan princes, as long as the race of the caliphs subsisted; though at this time they were no more than shadows of what they had been formerly.

In one of the battles, in which Barkiarok had the advantage, Mowiad happened to be taken prisoner; but, instead of being punished as he deserved, he, by his address, so gained over the principal lords of the court, that the humane sultan, at their intercession, pardoned him, and afterwards made him his prime visir. However, he did not long enjoy that post; for, one day Barkiarok, retiring to rest, overheard one of the gentlemen of his bed-chamber, who thought

Digitized by Google

him asleep, saying to another, "These Seljukian princes are of a nature very different from that of most others. They neither know how to make themselves feared, nor to revenge the injuries done to them; for instance, (added he) this Mowiad, who has been the cause of so many evils, is promoted by the sultan to the employment of visir, as a reward for all his treasons."

Barkiarok, stung by these reflections on his conduct, sent for the visir, and ordered him to sit down: then, without saying any thing farther, with one stroke of his scymitar he cut off his head, with so much dexterity, that it remained on his shoulders till the body fell. This feat being performed, he said to his courtiers, "See now if the princes of my house do not know how to make themselves feared, and take vengeance on their enemies."

While this tragedy was acting at court, the armies of the sultan and his brother often skirmished without coming to a general engagement. At length a treaty was concluded, whereby Mohammed and Barkiarok divided the empire between them. It was also agreed, that Barkiarok should not go to meet Mohammed with drums, nor be named in the pulpits in the countries which were ceded to him.

The civil wars which for many years together had afflicted the Seljukian dominions, being thus happily terminated between the brothers, we may now turn our eyes towards Syria, which was scarcely reduced under the power of the Seljukian Turks, who took it from the Arabs, when she found herself invaded by an army of Europeans. This was the famous crusade, commonly called the Holy War, in which almost all the

Digitized by Google

Christian princes, influenced by an enthusiastic zeal, and excited by the artifices of the pope, entered into a league of confederacy, to rescue the sepulchre of Christ at Jerusalem from the Mohammedans, and drive them out of the holy land.

Barkiarok, after the agreement made by his brother Mohammed, advanced towards Bagdad, to visit his great benefactor Ayyaz, who exercised sovereign authority in that city; but being taken ill on his journey, he died at Ispahan, appointing for his successor his son, Malec Shah, a child not five years old. He caused him to be clothed with a vest, and assigned Ayyaz for his governor, in the presence of his great officers, who all promised to obey his commands. About the same time, Mohammed marched to take Jagarmish. The people of their country rose in their prince's defence; but when the siege had lasted three months, Jagarmish, hearing of Barkiarok's death, submitted.

After this accommodation, the sultan, who already possessed one part of the Seljukian empire, prepared to wrest the other part from his nephew, Malec Shah, and unite it to his own. Having accomplished this object, he returned to Bagdad, where he found a pretended prophet, named Atthash, who had not only gained a great number of followers, but had seized upon a fortified place, which was so strong, both by situation and art, that there was no hope of reducing it but by famine.

The place not having been furnished with provisions, Atthash employed the sultan's visir, whom he had infected with his opinions, to assassinate his master. He accordingly bribed the

Digitized by Google

surgeon to use a poisoned lancet in the operation of bleeding. Mohammed being apprized of the plot, suffered his arm to be bound, and the fatal instrument to be taken from its case, when he cast so terrible a look upon the surgeon, as to make him drop the lancet from his hand, fall down at his sovereign's feet, and confess the whole design. The visir was immediately seized, and punished as he deserved; the surgeon was only sentenced to be bled with the same instrument which he had prepared to bleed the sultan.

The rebels, finding that their treason was discovered, and being no longer able to resist, surrendered at discretion. Atthash, their chief, was conducted to Ispahan, tied upon a camel; there, after the prophet had been exposed for some days to the derision of the people, he was put to a cruel death, and his body was burned, with those of a great number of his disciples, who had joined in the revolt. It is reported that this impostor, who was well versed in astrology and geomancy, finding himself hard pressed by the besiegers, wrote to the sultan, that he had found by his horoscope, that in a few days he should be surrounded with a great number of stars in the midst of Ispahan, even in the presence of the sultan; and when he was led through the city, accompanied with great crowds of spectators, to the place of execution, being asked concerning the accomplishment of his prediction, he answered, that nothing could be a clearer verification than the condition he then was in; but, that he found the great number of stars which he hoped to see, were not to serve, as he had believed, to

Digitized by Google

do him honour, but to cover him with shame and confusion.

Mohammed, having settled his dominions in peace, marched into Hindostan, where he made considerable progress: he was zealous in defence of religion, and was an opposer of idol worship. When the Indians offered the weight in precious stones, in exchange for one of their gods, which he had taken, he replied, "I would not for the "world have it reported, that Mohammed was "a merchant of images."

At the age of thirty-five, death terminated his career. When he perceived his last end approaching, he sent for his son Mahmud, who was then but fourteen years old, whom he had declared his successor, kissed him and wept, and ordered him to ascend the throne; but the young prince declined it, saying, it was an unlucky day. The sultan answered him, "You say true, but it is so to your father, who loses an empire, not to you who gain one." Then mounting the throne, he was crowned and adorned with bracelets. These, however, together with the immense treasures left by Mohammed, were soon wrested from the youthful monarch by his uncle Sanjar.

Mahmud then went to visit Sanjar, and was so well received, that he obtained of him the investiture of the province of Irak on the following conditions: that the name of Sanjar should always be mentioned in the public prayers before that of Mahmud; that this latter should not have the fourth veil in his apartments; that the trumpets should not be sounded when he went in or out of his palace; and, lastly, that he should retain the officers whom his uncle had established in his province.

Digitized by Google

Mahmud was obliged to receive these conditions with thanks, and resolved to spend his time in hunting, without meddling with the affairs of state. From the course of history, however, it appears, that an actual partition of empire took place soon after; by virtue of which Mahmud and his descendants were to enjoy the share allotted him, with the title of Sultan, in as absolute a manner as Sanjar enjoyed his.

In the year 1129, Sanjar passed the Jihun, to reduce Soliman, governor of Samarkand, who refused to pay the usual tribute. Being obliged to surrender, after a vigorous siege, the sultan spared his life, only depriving him of the government, which he bestowed on one of his slaves: but Soliman finding means to get into Sanjar's favour, was in a little time restored. After this event, Bahram Shah, sultan of the Gazni family, whose kingdom extended a great way into Hindostan, resolved to shake off the yoke of the Seljukians. The sultan entered his dominions with a large army, and Bahaam, not being able to resist so great a force, sent ambassadors to pay the tribute, and do homage for his crown, by which means he diverted the storm.

During a long reign, Sanjar extended his empire from Katay to Kotan, and from the Caspian Sea to Arabia Felix. He fought nineteen battles, of which he gained seventeen: he was much feared by his enemies, and celebrated for liberality and clemency to his subjects. He was active and diligent in the affairs of government, but hated kingly pride, wearing a coat made of skins. He was so well beloved by his people, that they continued to publish his name in the temples. They gave him also the surname of Alexander.

Digitized by Google

the second; and his name of Sanjar has passed for that of Alexander among his posterity.

The first remarkable event that we find in this reign, is the death of Kothboddin, founder of a new monarchy. His father, Bustekkin, was slave to Malkatekkin, who was one of Malec Shah's principal slaves, and possessed the employment of great butler, or cup-bearer, on whose death the sultan gave it to Bustekkin: and because the revenues of Karazm, a country on the east side of the Caspian Sea, were annexed to that office, he easily obtained the government of that province. His son, Cothboddin, succeeded him in all his places. As he was a man of spirit and valour, his credit increased so much during the reigns of Barkiarok and Sanjar, that he obtained the title of Karazm Shah, that is, king of Kharazm, which descended to all his posterity, in that great monarchy of which he was the founder, and which proved at length the ruin of the Seljukian dynasty of Iram, to which they owed their rise. However, Kothboddin, though very powerful, never departed from his obedience to the Sultans, and for thirty years did his duty of cup-bearer at court every second year, being relieved every other year by his son Atsiz.

Upon the death of Kothboddin, his son Atsiz succeeded both in his employments and the title of Karazm Shah, though no more in reality than governor of that province, like his father. He obtained great credit with Sanjar by his services, especially in coming up seasonably to rescue him out of an ambuscade contrived by Ahmed, governor of Samarkand; but afterwards growing out of favour at court, he retired to his government, where the people inclined to revolt. The

Digitized by Google

sultan, at his departure, saying to those about him, "I see the back of a man, whose face it is "likely I never shall see again," they advised to have him arrested: but Sanjar would not consent, alleging, that he should violate the acknowledgments due both to him and his father for their services, if he should do any thing to offend him on a bare suspicion.

Atsiz verified the sultan's prognostic, for he no sooner arrived in Karazm, than he put himself at the head of the rebels; so that Sanjar was obliged to reduce by force an enemy whom he had suffered to escape, by having more regard to the maxims of gratitude than those of policy.

Two years after this transaction, Samarkand rebelled again, in opposition to the governor; who, being afflicted with the palsy, was not able to act. The sultan marched against them; and after a siege of six months the city surrendered: but Sanjar spared the inhabitants, according to his usual clemency, and displacing the feeble father, gave the government of the place to his son.

After Sanjar's death, Mahmud, his sister's son, by Mohammed Khan, descended from Bagra Khan, succeeded in Khorasan: but at the end of five years, one of his lords revolted, and after several battles, seized his dominions, and deprived him of sight. The sultan of Kharazm, whose dynasty rose during the reign of Sanjar, taking advantage of these divisions in Khorasan, subdued one part of that great province, while the other remained in possession of the rebels; so that the Seljukian sultans, who still reigned in both the Iraks, no longer had any footing in Khorasan.

Digitized by Google

Mahmud took possession of all Sanjar's dominions; but Massud, one of his brothers, disputed his title sword in hand. He had another brother, named Togrol, who always continued his faithful adherent, to whom, in recompense for his attachment, Mahmud left his throne, after having reigned thirteen years.

He possessed a handsome person, and was very generous; but the love of women, and hunting, by degrees, impaired his character. It is reported, that his hunting equipage was so magnificent, that he kept four hundred greyhounds and blood-hounds, each of which wore a collar set with jewels, and a covering edged with gold and pearls. He laid out so much in this expence, that he often wanted money to pay his troops, and for other occasions; yet he did not oppress his subjects to recruit his coffers: he likewise restrained his favourites from doing them any injury. He was merciful, good-natured, and prudent. He forbore to punish those who spoke ill of him. No prince ever studied the art of reigning more. He was skilled in grammar, poetry, and chronology; was very eloquent, and wrote a fine hand.

A. D. 1130. Mahmud left for his successor his brother Togrol, surnamed Rocnoddin; but his brother Massud disputed the crown with him, and several battles were fought between them, for the space of the three or four years which he reigned. He was the second sultan of a branch of the Seljukians, who reigned in Persian and Arabian Irak; which proves that the agreement between Sanjar and Mahmud, contained a division of the Seljukian empire of Irak. It does not, however, appear, that the

Digitized by Google

oriental historians consider them as two separate monarchies, but as one and the same. Togrol died at Hammadan, after he had reigned three years. He was just and valiant, good-tempered and liberal: he understood the art of governing, and did nothing unbecoming a prince.

Massud was at Bagdad when his brother Togrol died; and while his friends sent a courier to invite him to Hamadan, then the capital of the Seljukians of Irak, the court party dispatched another to Dawd, son of Togrol, with the same view: but the uncle happening to get the start of the nephew, Massud was unanimously saluted sultan by the grandees. A. D. 1134.

He was scarcely seated on the throne, before he found himself obliged to make war on Al Mostarshed, the twenty-ninth caliph of Bagdad of the family of Al Abbas. It seems, that in the reign of Togrol, Dobays, who was governor-general of Irak Arabi for the caliph, plotted with that sultan to surprise him in Bagdad; but Togrol falling ill of a fever, prevented the execution of this: Al Mostarshed's army also was victorious. This war lasted till Massud came to the crown; when the caliph, at the persuasion of some court lords, had his name suppressed in the public prayers, and even deprived him of the title of Sultan.

Massud being informed of this injury, set out instantly from Ray, where he resided at the head of a powerful army, for the Arabian Irak; from whence the caliph advanced, accompanied by a great number of his grandees. The two armies came to a battle, when the caliph's left wing deserting to the sultan, he was surrounded and taken, while his right wing, after a slight opposi-

Digitized by Google

tion, fled. After this defeat, Bagdad opened its gates to Massud, without opposition. The sultan, having had another war on his hands, carried Mostarshed with him into the province of Adherbijan. Being arrived at Maragha, the caliph was confined in a tent, at a distance from the army, near the gate of that city, where messengers passed between him and the sultan relating to peace. At length it was agreed, that Al Mostarshed, besides paying yearly four hundred thousand crowns in gold, should remain in Bagdad, and not raise any other troops besides his ordinary guards.

After this agreement, that prelate was suffered to ride on horseback, with the covering of a saddle carried before him, in token of honour. In short, he was ready to return to Bagdad, when news being brought that an ambassador was arrived from sultan Sanjar, the people followed Massud to meet him; and, among the rest, some of those who had the care of the caliph. Twenty-four Batanists took the opportunity to get into his tent, and murder him, by giving him about twenty wounds, and cutting off his nose and ears. Many believed that Massud contrived this murder, and entered into a negociation with him only to cover his design.

Massud died at Hamadan, after he had reigned about eighteen years. He was a great lover of learned and pious men, humble and affable; and for religion, clemency, justice, and bravery, superior to all the Seljukians. He was the last of the sultans who had any power in the Arabian Irak; for, upon his demise, Moktafi deprived the Seljukians of all power and authority in that city.

Digitized by Google

Malec Shah II. succeeded his uncle Massud, but his reign was of no long continuance; and, indeed, he was wholly unworthy of the crown, for he regarded nothing but indulging his appetite, and left his affairs entirely to his ministers. His brother Mohammed found means to deprive him of his authority, which, however, he retained but a short time, when he re-ascended the throne, and, in a few days, died, at the age of thirty-two.

Soliman Shah being at Musol when his predecessor died, the great lords, after some debate, sent for him, and placed him on the throne; but, as he gave himself up entirely to voluptuousness, and the company of women, without attending to the affairs of the kingdom, they seized and imprisoned him, at the end of six months, advancing, in his room, his nephew Arslan. Setting aside his bad conduct, for which he was deposed, he did not want for good qualities; he was very familiar with those about him, and excelled in his behaviour, person, and eloquence. Arslan was proclaimed sultan in Hamadan, of whom we have heard but little worthy of record, during a reign of fifteen years. He was a prince not only valiant and generous, but patient and good-natured to a high degree. He would not suffer any body to be spoken ill of in his presence, nor ever treated any of his domestics with severity or contempt. He was very nice in his diet and apparel; for he had very rich vests of every kind and colour, wrought of gold, such as no king ever had before him. Togrol was the last sultan of the Seljuk dynasty of Persian Irak. He succeeded, and governed his dominions very happily,

A. D. 1100.

Digitized by Google

under the direction of his maternal uncle, Mohammed; after whose death a conspiracy broke out, which drove him from his capital. At length, he returned, and appointed a day to receive the submission of those who had acted against him. The lords did not fail, at the appointed time, of appearing before him, but, instead of asking forgiveness, they seized upon and imprisoned his person. As soon, however, as he regained his liberty, he raised an army, and, defeating the rebels, punished them severely.

The sultan now, thinking he was delivered from all his enemies, abandoned himself to women and wine; and, though he was told that Tukash, king of Kharazm, was raising a formidable army to invade his dominions, yet he continued his debaucheries till, at length, Takash arrived at the gates of Rey, while the sultan was still intoxicated. However, he put himself at the head of his troops, and marched towards the enemy, boasting of what he would do; but, raising his mace, as if he was going to strike, he discharged such a blow on one of the forelegs of his horse, that the beast fell under him, and he himself was thrown on the ground. One of the enemies, seeing him fall, immediately ran up, and, with one blow of his scymitar, put an end to his life, and the power of the Seljuks in Irak. The Seljukians of Irak were, in general, a race of very accomplished princes, eminent for their courage, liberality, justice, and other virtues, both civil and military. They owed their ruin chiefly to their great bounty, and indulgence to their favourites: and thus have we seen completed the history of the first and principal Seljukian dynasty.

Digitized by Google

The second branch or dynasty of the Seljukians, denominated of Kerman, began towards A. D. 1063, and ended in 1187, a space of one hundred and twenty-four years, and produced eleven sultans, whose names have not with certainty been preserved. Their authority was circumscribed to a small territory lying between Persia, Sejestan, Mekran, and Ormus; and they possessed some islands and harbours in the Persian gulf. The succession was, in general, hereditary, from father to son, but, in default of the latter, it descended to the brothers and nephews; whence it has been inferred, that this little state enjoyed the blessings of tranquillity.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XI.

The third Dynasty of the Seljukians, called that of Roum.

THIS dynasty of the Seljukians derives its name of Roum, from their having reigned in Asia Minor, comprehending the kingdoms of Pontus, Bithynia, Media, Phrygia, Galatia, Armenia Minor, Cappadocia, and other states, forming a vast peninsula between the Euxine Sea, and the Propontis and Archipelago, the Mediterranean Sea and Syria, as far as the Euphrates; all which composed a part of the Greek empire, which the Asiatics knew under the name of the Roman empire, and they called those countries the territories of Roum. The Arabs had penetrated into them through Syria, and the Turks, in pursuit of them during their wars, advanced into the interior of the country, drove out the Greeks, and took possession of the territory of Roum, which they afterwards called Anatolia. The conquest was begun under Malec Shah, a Seljukian sultan of Persia. He made over the cities he had captured, with a sufficient number of troops to enable him to pursue his success, to

A. D. 1074. one of his cousins, named Soliman, who was the founder of the dynasty of the Seljukian Turks.

The Greek writers agree with the account of this conquest, and the commencement of the reign of Soliman, as delivered by the oriental authors, whom we follow; for they tell us, that

Digitized by Google

soon after the death of the emperor Romanus Diogenes, the Turks broke into the territories of the empire. Michael Ducas, his successor, being alarmed at this irruption, sent against them Isaac Comnenus, who, after having gained a few advantages, was defeated and taken prisoner near Cesarea. His brother Alexis, on his return, was attacked by a party of Turks, who had already made incursions in Bithynia, as far as Nice; Alexis in this, and other instances, defending himself with extraordinary courage and address. About the same time, Isaac Comnenus, newly made governor of Antioch, was slain in an engagement with a party of Turks, who had made an irruption into Syria.

After this event, several persons aspired to the empire, but Botaniates, being assisted by Soliman, took possession of it. He raised forces to oppose Nicephorus Bryennius, who aspired to the throne. This lord, during two former rebellions in Europe, declaring himself emperor, had assembled some Turkish troops in Asia Minor, with which he overran that country, putting all the towns he took into the hands of the Turks. By these means, in a little time, they became masters of all Phrygia and Galatia; in short, he reduced Nice in Bithynia, and struck terror through the whole empire: and thus, probably, that famous city came to be possessed by Soliman, who afterwards made it the seat of his new empire.

Botaniates, greatly alarmed at these successes, sent an army against the enemy, under the command of John, an eunuch, who encamped a little way from Nice, which he determined to invest; but, hearing of the sultan's approach to

Digitized by Google

relieve the place, the eunuch retired, and the Turks pursued, and harassed him extremely.

As Botaniates had gained the empire by the help of the Turks, so he employed their power to overcome Nicephorus; but those adventurers, who were ready to join with any party to serve their own purpose, afterwards assisted his competitors to dethrone him. At length he resigned the crown to Alexis, in the year 1081.

At the time when Alexis ascended the throne, Soliman, who commanded in Anatolia, had fixed his seat at Nice, in Bithynia, and daily made inroads with his Turks as far as the Bosphorus; but Amalis, by ordering armed barks to scour the coast, obliged them soon to abandon it. Pursuing his advantage by land, he retook Bosphorus, Thynia, and Bithynia; whereupon the sultan sued for peace, which was granted the Turks, on condition that they kept on the banks of the river Draco, without ever passing the border of Bithynia.

The dissensions which agitated Constantinople were very favourable to the enterprises of Soliman, whose alliance was courted by all the competitors in turns. Into whatever treaties the contending parties entered, he was considered as an auxiliary, and, in consequence, constantly acquired some small portion from the wreck, which served to extend his domains. This sultan fortified himself in several provinces, where he took possession of some very advantageous posts. In this manner he became master of Antioch, and made Nice, in Bithynia, the royal residence. Soliman either fell in battle, or slew himself, after a defeat. He governed all the country lying between the Ægean, the Syrian,

Digitized by Google

and the Euxine Seas, the Archipelago, and the coasts of Pamphilia and Cilicia. After his death, they were claimed by the governors of Asia Minor. The emperor of Constantinople also regained some places by stratagem; but though Nice, the capital, was vigorously attacked, the Greeks could not wrest it from the hands of Pucasa, the governor, who restored it to Kilij Arslan, the eldest son of Soliman.

When the news of Soliman's death reached the ears of the governors of Asia Minor, they divided his territories among themselves. Apelkassem became lord of Nice, famous for the palace of the sultans. He had before given Cappadocia to his brother Pulkas, but, being naturally active, he thought it did not become the dignity of a sultan to sit idle, and made incursions into Bithynia, as far as the Propontis. The emperor, finding he could not be brought to a treaty, sent a powerful army, under Taticius, to besiege Nice, which encamped at twelve miles distance from that city.

The night following, a peasant brought the news that Prosuk was approaching, at the head of fifty thousand men; Taticius retired, and Apelkassem pursued, and attacked him at Preneste; but the French, who were in the army, headed by Taticius, couching their lances with their usual alertness, fell on them like lightning, defeated them, and gave Taticius leisure to retreat.

Apelkassem, with a desire to conquer the islands, built ships, with an intention of taking the city of Scio; but the emperor sent and burnt them in the harbour. At the same time, Taticius attacked and totally defeated the Turks. The emperor, on this occasion, wrote an obliging

Digitized by Google

letter to Apelkassem, desiring him to desist from his fruitless attempts, and invited him to come to Constantinople. That prince, understanding that Prosuk had taken many lesser towns, accepted of the invitation, and was received with extraordinary honours.

Prosuk, soon after, laid siege to Nice, and, having attacked it vigorously for three months, Apelkassem solicited succour from the emperor, who sent him the flower of his troops, but with orders to act for his own interest, both parties being his enemies. The Roman troops, being admitted into Nice, displayed their standards; upon which Prosuk, believing the emperor had entered the city, raised the siege, and retired.

It will be proper to observe here, that as soon as Malec Shah, who reigned in Khorasan, was informed of the success obtained against Soliman, he was alarmed, and, fearing he might grow too powerful, sent to the emperor Alexis, to propose an alliance with him, by way of marriage: offering, on that occasion, to withdraw the Turks settled near the sea-coast; to abandon a certain number of small towns; and furnish him with troops, in case of need.

The emperor, desirous to recover the places without the marriage, prevailed on the messenger to turn Christian; after which conversion, as he had a written order from the sultan, for the Turkish garrisons to quit all the maritime places as soon as the marriage was agreed on, he went to Sinope, and, shewing the order to Karatik, the governor, obliged him to depart without taking any thing away, and left it in the hands of Dalassenes for the emperor. Having,

Digitized by Google

by the like artifice, removed the Turks out of other towns, and put in Roman garrisons, he returned to Constantinople, where he was baptised, and received the title of duke of Ankhialus, with considerable rewards.

The sultan was exceedingly mortified when he understood these particulars; nevertheless, he sent a letter to the emperor, assuring him that, provided he gave his daughter in marriage to his son, he would assist him with troops to prevent Apelkassem's incursions, and wrest Antioch out of his hands. At the same time, he sent Pusan, with forces, against Apelkassem. The emperor wrote an answer, which, without granting his demand, flattered his hopes. In the mean while, Pusan attacked Nice several times; but, being repulsed by means of the emperor's succours, retired to Lopadion, on the river Lampe. As soon as he was gone, Apelkassem, loading fourteen mules with gold, set out for Persia, to obtain the sultan's confirmation in the government: but the sultan, who was then at Spaka, refusing to see him, ordered him to return to Pusa; saying, he would confirm whatever the other agreed to. After a long and fruitless solicitation, he set out on his way home, but had not proceeded far, when he was met by two hundred men, who, by the sultan's order, strangled him. The ambassador, who carried the emperor's letter, proceeded on his journey; but hearing, before he reached Khorasan, that the sultan himself was assassinated, he returned to Constantinople. After Apelkassem had departed for Khorasan, Pulkas, his brother, took possession of Nice, which the emperor, by large offers, tempted him to deliver

Digitized by Google

up; but he still put him off, under pretence of expecting the return of his brother. While this matter was in agitation, the two sons of Amir Soliman, escaping on the death of the murdered Sultan, by whom they were detained in prison, arrived at Nice, where they were received by those who had most power with the people, and acknowledged by Pulkas, who delivered up the city into their hands. From this revolution, which, according to the course of the Greek history, happened about the year 1093, we date the commencement of the reign of Kilij Arslan.

Nice having thus, after an usurpation of several years, been restored to the heirs of Soliman, Klig Arslan, the eldest, assumed the reins of government. His first care was to re-people the city, by recalling the wives and children of the old inhabitants, as he designed to honour it with the chief residence of the sultans. Then, displacing Pulkas, he made Mohammed governor; after which appointment, he marched towards Melicene.

His chief expeditions were against the Greeks: he was likewise successful against those of his own nation, who had usurped his cities, and gained some important advantages over the crusaders, whom he dispossessed of Nice, which they had taken. He established another capital at Iconium, whence his successors derive their title of Sultans of Iconium. Kilij Arslan, having lost a battle, was drowned in attempting to escape across a river, which his horse was unable to ford. He had held the reins of power fourteen years.

The history of the sultans of Iconium is principally drawn from the Greek authors, who,

Digitized by Google

having no personal knowledge of them, have scarcely preserved any traits of these princes deserving notice, either of their customs, characters, or intrigues of their court; in fact, nothing which will serve to interrupt the dull monotony of feats of arms, which are at all times alike—devastations, massacres, and conflagrations. We are therefore obliged to collect from these wearisome narratives a few events, more or less interesting, under the names and dates of these princes.

It should, however, be mentioned, that at this period Peter the Hermit, author of the crusade, arrived at Constantinople, at the head of eighty thousand men, devoted to the recovery of Jerusalem from the Turks. The emperor advised him to wait till Godfrey of Bulloin, and the other princes, arrived; but Peter, confident of his own success, passed the sea, and encamped near a city called Helenopolis. From which place ten thousand Normans, who were among them, made an incursion as far as Nice, committing the most horrible cruelties: but the garrison of that city sallying out upon them, they were obliged to retreat. They afterwards took Xerigorda, but Elkan, being sent with some troops by the sultan, recovered that place.

That general, knowing the Franks to be very covetous, contrived a scheme for their destruction. He first laid his ambuscade, and then commissioned two artful persons to publish in Peter's army, that the Normans had taken Nice, and seized an immense booty. On this report they ran, without any order, toward that city, and, falling into the ambuscade which had been laid for them, were cut in pieces. The number

Digitized by Google

slain on both sides was so great, that their bodies, being heaped together, formed a mountain. Peter retired, with a small number of his men, to Helenopolis, where the Turks besieged, and would have taken him, had not the emperor sent some troops to relieve the place.

Soon after, the rest of the western princes arriving, they invested Nice. The sultan sent some troops to annoy the Christians, but they were defeated, as was the sultan himself, who hereafter could do no more than occasionally supply the city with provisions and men. The Franks, in a short time, made a general assault, and the city surrendered.

The emperor thought this a good opportunity to recover other places from the Turks. Accordingly, Smyrna, Ephesus, Sardis, Philadelphia, and other cities of less consequence, surrendered to his victorious arms. In the mean time, the emperor Alexis, prepared to assist the Franks, who were besieged by the Turks, in Antioch, and recovered several places out of their hands. About that time there arrived at Constantinople an army of Normans, amounting to one hundred thousand foot, and one hundred and fifty thousand horse, with an intention of conquering Khorasan itself; but the Turks, who were skilled in the art of war, carried off all the provisions in the country through which they passed, so that they had no opportunity to get forage for their horses. The Normans, in despair, rushed upon their enemy; but the Turks, instead of engaging them at a distance with the lance, came to a close fight with their swords, and made a dreadful slaughter. The remainder fled with great precipitation towards

Digitized by Google

Armenia; but the horse leaving the infantry behind, they were all slain by the Turks, excepting a few, whom they reserved, as it were, to make a shew in Khorasan.

Kilij Arslan was succeeded by Sasan, his brother. The coast of Asia having, by the late wars, been ruined, from Smyrna to Attalia, and those once populous and stately cities become heaps of rubbish, the emperor sent Filokales to restore them. That nobleman first rebuilt Endromit, and peopled it with peasants and strangers. Afterwards, being informed that the Turks were assembling near Lampis, he sent thither some troops, who cut part of them in pieces, and took a great number prisoners; using their victory so cruelly, that they boiled children to death. The Turks who remained put on mourning, and went over the country to excite their companions to vengeance. A. D. 1106.

At the same time, Filokales reduced Philadelphia without any trouble; but, soon after, Hasan, one of the chief commanders, who governed almost absolutely in Cappadocia, hearing of the barbarities exercised by the Romans, came at the head of twenty-four thousand men, and besieged the place. Filokales, who abounded in stratagems, not having forces to take the field, forbade the inhabitants either to open the gates, appear on the walls, or make the least noise. Hasan, having been before the town three days, and seen no person appear, concluded that the besieged had neither forces nor courage enough to make sallies. Hereupon, he divided his army, sending ten thousand men to Kolbiana, another party towards Smyrna, and a third towards Pergamus, with orders to ravage the country; and

Digitized by Google

he himself followed with another party. As soon as Filokales saw the Turks thus divided, he sent troops to attack them separately; they accordingly came up with and defeated the two first detachments, killing a great number of the men; but could not overtake either of the others.

Some time after this event, Amir Saysan marched from the East, with a design to ravage Philadelphia and the maritime cities. The emperor, on this advice, sent a small body of troops up the river Scamander to Endromit and Thrakesion, to await his orders. Gauras commanded at that time at Philadelphia, with a strong garrison, and Monastres at Pergamus. The army sent by the sultan of Khorasan, advanced in two bodies; one of them crossed Mount Sinai, and the other marched into Asia Minor. Gauras went out to meet these latter, and, coming up with them at Kelbiana, routed them. When the sultan, who had sent them, heard of this defeat, he dispatched ambassadors to the emperor, who, after he had put several questions to them concerning their master, concluded a peace.

He had not been long at rest before he was alarmed with a new irruption of fifty thousand Turks from Anatolia, and even from Khorasan. The emperor, on this intelligence, passed the s[illegible] from Constantinople to Damalis; and, though afflicted with the gout, drove the chariot with his own hands. In three days he arrived at Aigyla, where he embarked for Civitot. As soon as he landed, he was informed that the commanders of the enemy had divided their forces into separate bodies.

Digitized by Google

Alexis ordered Kamitzes, governor of Nice, to follow the Turks with five hundred men, to watch their motions, but to avoid fighting. The governor came up with the sultan's army, and, forgetting his orders, attacked them with great impetuosity. The enemy, having heard of the emperor's march, and, concluding that he had fallen upon them with all his forces, betook themselves to flight; but, being made sensible of their mistake by a prisoner, they rallied their forces; and, having met with Kamitzes, who stayed to divide the spoil, instead of getting into Pamanene, attacked him at break of day: his soldiers all fled, excepting the Scythians, the French, and a few Romans, who fought valiantly; but most of them being at length slain, and his own horse killed, he set his back against an oak, and managed his sword so effectually, that he killed or wounded all who came within his reach. The Turks, surprised at his valour, and being desirous to preserve him, Amir Mohammed alighted off his horse, and, putting aside those who fought with him, said, "Give me your hand, and prefer life to death." Kamitzes, unable to resist such a multitude, gave his hand to Mohammed, who ordered him to be tied on horseback, that he might not escape.

The emperor, discovering the road which the Turks had taken, took another. He passed by Nice; then crossed Malagne and Basilicus, two very narrow passes of the mountain Olympus. He afterwards marched to Aletines, and from thence to Aciocus, with a design to get before the enemy. There being informed that they were encamped in a valley full of reeds, where they thought themselves in no danger, he fell

Digitized by Google

upon them with his forces, killed a vast number, and took a great multitude prisoners; the rest thought to escape, by lying concealed among the thick reeds: the soldiers could not come at them, for that reason, and the marshiness of the place: but Alexis having ordered the reeds at one end to be fired, the Turks flew from the flames into the hands of the Romans, who killed one half, and carried off the other.

Amir Mohammed, having been joined by the Turkmans and some other people of Asia Minor, appeared at the same instant, to give the emperor battle; and, though Alexis opened a way for himself, by defeating those he pursued, yet Mohammed came up with the rear, commanded by Aphelas and Tzipurcles, who, running full speed against the Turks, Mohammed, who well knew how to make use of an advantage, finding them at a distance from their soldiers, shot at their horses, which, falling, they were surrounded and slain. Nevertheless, his troops were put to flight by those left to guard the baggage and the horses; in which confusion Kamitzes made his escape.

Alexis, returning, went to take the air at the pass of Malagna, on the top of Mount Olympus, whither the empress came to him, from the prince's isle: there being informed that the Turks were at hand, he marched towards Nice; but the enemy, without waiting for him, fled. However, being overtaken by two of his generals, who, from the top of the Germinian mountains, observed their motions, they were defeated.

The emperor, being arrived at Fort Saint George, passed on to the town of Sagydeum, and thence to Helenopolis, where the empress

Digitized by Google

waited for a wind to return to Constantinople. News being presently brought of another irruption of the Turks, Alexis marched to Lopadion, and thence to Khio; where, being informed that the enemy were at Nice, he retired to Miskura; but, understanding, afterwards, that they were only flying parties, who appeared about that city and Doryleum, to observe his motions, and not thinking himself yet sufficiently strong to follow them to Kogni, he turned towards Nicomedia. The enemy judging, by this motion, that he had no design to attack them, took their former posts, and renewed their incursions; a circumstance which gave occasion to his enemies at court to reproach him with doing nothing, after having raised so considerable an army.

When the spring was past, Alexis judged it time to march to Kogni: from Nice he passed to Gaita, and the bridge of Pithicus; then having, in three days, arrived in the vast plain of Doryleum, he reviewed his army, and contrived a new method of drawing up his forces in order of battle. He found that the Turks did not fight like other people, joining their bucklers and bodies close together; but divided their troops into a main body and two wings, like three different armies: that, when one was attacked, the others moved to its assistance with extreme order: that they did not make use of lances, like the French, but endeavoured to close their enemies, and kill them with arrows: that their usual way of fighting was at a distance: and, whether pursuing or pursued, they made use of the bow, which they drew with such force and dexterity, that they never failed to pierce either the man who attacked them, or his horse.

Digitized by Google

For this reason, the emperor ordered his army to be drawn up in such a manner that his soldiers should oppose their bucklers to the side which was exposed to the Turkish arrows; and that others should direct their shafts to that side which the Turks uncovered in using their bows. Having arrived at Santabaris, he divided his forces, in order to execute several different designs.

The emperor was informed that Sultan Soliman had set fire to all the forage through Asia Minor; and that another army of Turks was coming to oppose him: he consulted God, to know whether he should march towards Kogni, or give battle to the Turks, who were coming from Filomilion. Having written these two questions on two pieces of paper, he laid them, in the evening, on the altar, and spent the night in prayer. In the morning the bishop entered, and, taking up the first paper which came to hand, unfolded it, and read it aloud; whereby he was determined to go to Filomilion. In the mean time, Bardas, having passed the bridge of Zompi, defeated a large body of Turks in the plain of Amorion, while another pillaged his camp. Being pressed hard afterwards, by a third party, the enemy came up entirely to rescue him. Alexis, having passed Mesonacte, near the lake of Forty Martyrs, arrived at Filomilion, which he took by storm: from hence he detached divers parties, to ravage the towns and villages about Kogni; these brought away a great number of Turks, and a prodigious quantity of plunder: they were followed by infinite crowds of peasants, who came to take refuge in the emperor's dominions.

The emperor returning, in order of battle, for

Digitized by Google

a long time met with no Turks, although Monolykus kept on one side of him with some troops: but being arrived in the plain, the enemy appeared. Monolykus, who was a man in years, and of great experience, began the attack, and continued it all the day, without making any impression on the Roman ranks. On the next day, Sultan Khliziastlan arrived, and, though he was no less surprised at the new disposition of the Roman army than Monolykus, yet, being in the heat of youth, he reproached that old man with his pusillanimity. At the same instant, the sultan attacked the rear, and sent two bodies to fall on the van and one of the wings.

The Turks fought with great intrepidity. Andronicus Porphyrogenitus, the emperor's son, who commanded the left wing, was killed. Nicephorus Bryennius, who was at the head of the right, fearing the van would be defeated, advanced to its assistance; upon which, the Turks, with Sultan Khliziastlan, turned their backs, and re-ascended the hills. As those who escaped fled different ways, the sultan, with his cupbearer, got into a chapel, upon a mount planted with cypress, where they were followed by three Scythians, and a Greek, who took the cupbearer; but Khliziastlan, not being known to them, had the good fortune to escape. In the night, the Turks assembled on the tops of hills, lighted a great number of fires, and howled like dogs.

On the next day, the baggage, women, and children being placed in the middle, the army marched towards Amprus; but, on the way, the sultan, having assembled all his forces, inclosed, and attacked them courageously: how-

Digitized by Google

ever, he could not break their ranks, which stood as firm as a wall. Being vexed, and ashamed that he was not able to obtain any advantage against the emperor, he held a council in the night, and, at break of day, sent to treat of peace.

Alexis, who was then in the plain between Augustopolis and Aoronium, caused his army to halt, and went to the place of interview, with his relations and chief officers, guarded by some soldiers: the sultan came presently after, accompanied by all his officers, with Monolykus at their head; who, as soon as they came in sight, alighted, and saluted the emperor: the sultan would have done the same, but Alexis prevented him: however, when he was near, he alighted and kissed the foot of that prince, who presented him his hand, and ordered a horse to be brought for him; then taking off his mantle, he put it on the sultan. After this ceremony, entering on the subject of peace, Alexis agreed that he should remain in possession of all the territories which the Turks possessed before the reign of Diogenes, and the battle in which he was taken prisoner. Next day, the sultan and his officers signed the treaty, and the emperor made them rich presents.

While this affair was transacting, Alexis, having discovered that Masut had conspired to assassinate Sultan Saysan, his brother, he advised him to stay with him till the plot was blown over; but, trusting in his own power, he resolved to return, nor would so much as accept of a guard to escort him to Kogni; although he had been disconcerted by a remarkable dream: he thought a great swarm of flies surrounded him

Digitized by Google

while at dinner, and snatched the bread out of his hand; and that when he went to drive them away, they changed into lions. On the morning after, he asked a Roman soldier the meaning of his dream; who told him that the insults of the flies and lions seemed to denote a conspiracy of enemies. Nevertheless, the sultan would believe nothing, but continued his journey with more obstinacy than before.

However, he sent his spies abroad, who, indeed met with Masut at the head of an army; but, having espoused his interest, they went back, and told Saysan that they had seen nobody on the road; so that the sultan, proceeding without any mistrust, fell into the snare. As soon as he came in sight, Gazi, son of the commander, Hassan Katuk, whom Saysan had put to death, set spurs to his horse, gave him a stroke with his lance, which Saysan snatching out of his hands, said, with an air of contempt, "I did not know that women carried arms." Pulkheas, who was in his train, and held a correspondence with his brother Masut, pretending great zeal for his service, advised him to retire to Tyganion, a small city near Filomilion, where he was very kindly received by the inhabitants, who knew he had made peace with the emperor, under whose obedience they were.

Masut came presently after, and invested the place, on the walls of which Saysan appeared, and reproached his subjects with their perfidiousness; threatening them with the approach of the Romans, and a punishment suitable to their crime. These menaces were supported by the vigorous resistance made by the besieged. It was then that Pulkheas discovered his treachery;

Digitized by Google

for, coming down from the wall, on pretence of encouraging the inhabitants to defend the place, he assured them that there was a powerful army on the road to assist the besiegers, and that they had no other way to prevent their being plundered, than to surrender at discretion. The citizens following his counsel, delivered Saysan up to his enemies; who having had no instrument with them fit for the purpose, made use of a candlestick, made red-hot, which was held before his eyes till he was deprived of sight. When he was brought to Kogni, he declared to his foster-father that he could see. The foster-father told this circumstance to his wife, who kept the secret so well, that it became public in a few days; and coming to the ears of Masut, it put him in such a rage, that he ordered Elgam, one of his commanders, to go and strangle his unhappy brother.

Although this account of Saysan is but lamely introduced, and for want of some distinguishing marks, he may seem to be a different person from Khliziastlan, yet from the circumstances of the whole, they appear clearly enough to be the same sultan, under two different names; or rather that, through inadvertence in compiling from two different memoirs, the name of Khliziastlan has been put in some places for that of Saysan.

This event happened about the year of Christ, 1116, so that this sultan must have reigned ten years. He was succeeded by Massud.

A. D. 1116. The emperor, John Comnenus, who succeeded Alexis, finding that the Turks, instead of keeping their treaties made with his father, sacked several cities of Phrygia,

Digitized by Google

marched against, and defeated them. After which action he took Laodicea, and enclosed it with walls; he then returned to Constantinople, but soon after departed, in order to recover Sozopolis in the same country. As the city was defended by a strong garrison, and surrounded with precipices, he ordered some troops to hover at a distance, and shoot at the inhabitants. This stratagem drew them into the plain, as the emperor expected; and while they pursued the Romans, who fled, they were cut off by an ambuscade, by which means the city fell into his hands. He likewise reduced several other places of smaller consequence; then he invaded Armenia and Syria, taking in both several strong places, and dispersed the Turks in various parts of Asia. He suffered great inconvenience in the enemies' country, from the severe cold and want of provisions, which destroyed most of the horses of his army. Of this disaster the Turks took advantage, but being at length repulsed, the emperor returned to Neocæsarea, where he had several skirmishes with them, but did not recover that city; a miscarriage, which was owing in a great measure to John Comnenus, his brother Isaac's son; who, resenting that his uncle should order him to give one of his horses to an Italian, who had lost his own, joined the Turks, and changing his religion, married, as it was said, the daughter of Massud, at Kogni.

In the course of the same year he marched into Phrygia, to Attalia, a famous city, in order to repress the incursions of the Turks, who had, amongst the rest, seized the Palus Pugusianus. This is a lake of vast extent, with many islands in it, whose inhabitants, by trading with the

Digitized by Google

enemy, had become so much their friends, that they joined in opposing the emperor: but by means of vessels and engines, with which he battered the isles, he reduced them at last, though not without the loss of some barks and men.

While these things happened in the west, Massud was not negligent in extending his dominions in the east. In the year 1143, John Comnenus died, and was succeeded by his son Manuel. One of his first cares was, to march against the Turks, who were ravaging Thrace, and having put them to flight, he pushed on directly for Kogni, at which time Massud was gone to encamp at Tazara. In behalf of her father Massud, the wife of John Comnenus harangued them very ably from the walls of the city. The emperor having reconnoitered the place, retired, but was forced to fight several battles on the road, in order to open a way back for his army.

In the year 1146, Conrade, emperor of Germany, and other Christian princes who had taken the cross, arrived at Constantinople, in their way to Syria, intending to pass through Lesser Asia. The Greeks were in such haste to get rid of them that their whole marine was employed to convey them over. The emperor Manuel took some care about their subsistence, but at the same time ordered ambuscades to be laid for them in the difficult passes; by which means a great number of them perished. The inhabitants of cities, in their march, instead of receiving and supplying them freely with provisions, shut their gates, and extorted from them exorbitant prices for such provisions as they thought fit to supply, in baskets lowered down from the top of their walls. There were even some who spoiled the

Digitized by Google

flour, and mixed it with lime. But it is not certain that all this was done by the emperor's order, as was pretended; although it was known that he had commanded base silver to be coined, to pay them for the goods they sold. In a word, there is no mischief which Manuel did not contrive against them, that their posterity might, by the misfortune of their ancestors, be deterred from ever setting foot on Roman ground.

The Germans and French had not marched far into Asia, before they were met by the Turkish army, commanded by one Pamplan, who, excited by the letters of Manuel, and animated by his example, attacked and defeated them. They afterwards appeared at the Meander, to oppose their passage; but Conrade spurring his horse into the river, his army followed; and, passing over, fell on the Turks with such fury, that scarcely any escaped. The slaughter might be judged of by the vast mountains of bones in that place, which Nicetas had himself beheld with astonishment. The same historian tells us, that after this glorious victory, the Germans met with no enemy to oppose them, during the remainder of their march. But we are acquainted, by the western writers, who are best informed, that the disappearance of the enemy lasted only till the Franks came to Iconium, the capital of the Turkish dominions in Lesser Asia. This city they closely invested; but it was so strongly fortified both by nature and art, as well as bravely defended by the Turks, that though they lay a long time before the place, they made no progress in its reduction. At length, provisions failing in their camp, such a mortality ensued among the soldiers, that the emperor Con-

Digitized by Google

rade was glad to raise the siege, and return home. The cause of this mortality, and miscarriage of the whole expedition, is generally ascribed to the treachery of the Greeks, whom they charge with having betrayed the designs of the Christians to Sultan Massud.

Massud, at his death, divided his dominions and provinces among his sons. He gave to Kelej-Arslan his capital, Kogni, with the places depending on it: to his son-in-law, Jagupasan, the cities of Amasia and Ancyra, with Cappadocia: and to Dadun, the cities of Cæsarea and Sebaste. The three brothers did not live in unity; for the sultans of Kogni and Cappadocia envying each other's possessions, carried their complaints before the emperor Manuel, who secretly widened the breach between them; though he openly agreed to assist Jagupasan, through the aversion which he had to the sultan, a prince of a gloomy disposition, who studied the death of all his kindred, and often made incursions on the Roman territories.

The sultan afterwards went to meet the emperor on his return to Constantinople, from his expedition to the west, and was received with joy, as he imagined his presence would serve to settle his affairs in the east: a triumph was ordered on that occasion; but the people were so terrified with an earthquake, which threw down the best houses in the city, and darkened the air with vapours, that his pageantry was but little regarded. During the long stay which the sultan made at Constantinople, he often diverted himself with public shows.

The emperor, who had made him considerable presents, carried him one day into his cabinet;

Digitized by Google

and having shown him a great deal of gold and silver coin, wrought plate, splendid habits, and rich silks, displayed for that purpose, asked him which of these parcels he would have? The sultan said, he should receive with respect that which was agreeable to his majesty to give. Manuel then demanded if, with the money which he saw, he should be able to humble his enemies? Khliziastlan answered, that he would have done it long ago, in case he had been master of but part of that wealth. Then, said the emperor, I will give you the whole, that you may judge what a monarch possesses, who can make such magnificent presents.

The sultan, charmed with such liberality, engaged to restore to Manuel the city of Sebaste, with its dependencies. The emperor accepted the offer with joy, and promised to make him farther presents, provided he performed his engagements; and to induce him to keep his word, sent Constantine Gauras with the money and troops. But Khliziastlan was no sooner arrived at Kogni, than he ruined Sebaste, took Cæsarea, drove Dadun out of his territories, and went in pursuit of Jagupasan, who died while he was raising forces to oppose his enemy.

The emperor ordered the ambassador to reproach the sultan, in his name, with his breach of faith and inconstancy: but Khliziastlan, far from paying any regard to his remonstrances, though he called him father, went to Laodicea, which, at that time, was not walled, and carried off a great number of prisoners, as well as cattle, killing also many people, and amongst the rest, the bishop. The Turks committed other ra-

Digitized by Google

vages; but Manuel restrained them, and built several forts to secure the frontiers.

The sultan having received a reinforcement from Mesopotamia, sent an embassy to demand peace of the emperor, on his own terms; which all the persons of experience advised him to accept; representing, that the cavalry of the Turks was invincible; that they had seized the inaccessible parts of the country; and that a contagious distemper already prevailed in the Roman army. But Manuel, suffering himself to be led by his relations, who had never been in a camp before, sent back the ambassador, without proposing any terms. The sultan having applied for peace a second time, and received no other answer than that the emperor would satisfy his demands when he came to Kogni, he prepared an ambuscade in the pass of Sybriza, through which the Romans were to march.

It is a long valley, bounded on one side with high mountains, and on the other by deep precipices. The emperor, instead of detaching a body of light troops to reconnoitre the country and clear the way, divided his army into six bodies, and marched behind the baggage, at the head of the fifth, which consisted of the flower of his troops. The two first corps passed the most dangerous places without any loss; because they covered themselves with their bucklers, and valiantly fought the enemy, who attacked them from the tops of the rocks. For want of these precautions, the right wing, which made the third body, was broken and cut to pieces, with Baldwin, the emperor's brother-in-law, who commanded them. The Turks, elated

Digitized by Google

with this success, blocked up the pass entirely; so that the Romans could neither advance nor retreat: in a moment both men and horses were pierced with infinite showers of arrows, which covered the ground with dead bodies.

The enemy made great efforts to defeat the troops which were about the emperor, who tried several times to repulse them, and open a passage: but not being able to compass his design, he threw himself almost alone into the middle of them, and happily escaped, after he had received several wounds: about thirty arrows were sticking in his buckler, and his casque was half beaten off. In the mean time the soldiers fell thick in the battle; and those who escaped this fatal pass, perished in the valley. The whole defile consisted of seven vallies, one within another, the entrance of which was pretty wide, and the exit very narrow. A violent wind happening to raise clouds of dust, both parties fought for some time in the dark, killing indifferently their friends and foes. However, a much greater number of the Romans were slain than of the Turks, and chiefly the emperor's relations.

When the storm was over, men were seen buried up to the waist among dead bodies, extending their arms, and imploring help with lamentable cries, without being able to obtain any, from men who were in too much danger themselves to think of assisting others.

The emperor appeared alone, without his armour-bearer or guards, resting himself under a wild pear-tree; there was only one horseman who offered to assist him, and tried to refit his head-piece. At the same time a Turk seized the

Digitized by Google

bridle of his horse, but he struck him down with a piece which remained of his lance. Others advancing to take him, he drove them off with the lance of the horseman who attended him, killing one of them, while his assistant cut off the head of another with his sword. Having been joined at length by ten Romans, he surmounted, with incredible fatigue, the difficulties of the passes: then crossing the river, and marching over dead bodies, he found a troop of his soldiers, who came up as soon as they saw him. He beheld in the way, John Cantacuzenus, who had married his niece, fighting very valiantly, but at length killed and stripped upon the spot. Those who had slain him, perceiving the emperor, made a ring, closing their ranks, to surround him. They were mounted on barbs, well trained, which, among other ornaments, had long collars of hair, with little bells. Manuel, encouraging his men, repulsed the enemy vigorously, and still advancing, at length joined the first legions.

Contostephanus and some others arrived in the evening. They passed the night in the greatest anxiety, and accounted themselves no better than dead men, considering the dangers which surrounded them. What terrified them most was to hear the Turks coursing round their camp, calling aloud to their countrymen to quit it, for that the next morning they would put all to the sword. The emperor hereupon conceived the design of flying privately, and leaving his people to be slaughtered; nor was he ashamed to own his intention to his friends, who were filled with indignation.

A soldier who was without the tent, and heard

Digitized by Google

what he said, raising his voice, cried out, "What a detestable thought has entered into the mind of the emperor!" Then addressing his speech to him, "Is it not you (said he) who have brought us to perish here, under rocks which bruise us, and mountains which overwhelm us? What have we to do in this valley of groans and tears, in this descent to hell, in the midst of precipices and pits? We have had no difference with these barbarians who have enclosed us within this chain of mountains: it is you who have led us to the slaughter to sacrifice us as victims." This bold speech touched the emperor, and induced him to submit to the necessity of the occasion.

While no hope seemed to be left for the Romans, the sultan, by persuasion of the principal men of his court, who in time of peace received pensions and presents from the emperor, proposed to offer him terms of peace. However, the Turks, who knew nothing of their master's intentions, prepared at day-break to attack the camp. Twice the Romans made a sally to repulse them, without gaining any advantage. In the mean time, the sultan sent Gauras, who, having ordered hostilities to cease, and saluted the emperor after the Turkish fashion, presented him with a sword, and a horse which had a silver bit, and was very well trained, making use of the most gentle words to comfort him. Observing that Manuel had on a black vest over his cuirass, he said, "That colour is not proper in time of war, and presages no good luck." The emperor smiling, gave him the vest, which was adorned with gold and purple. Afterwards he concluded and signed the peace.

The emperor designed to avoid returning by

Digitized by Google

the field of battle; but the guides brought him directly through it, that he might behold at leisure the deplorable spectacle. In short the valleys and forests were covered, and every hollow filled, with dead bodies. The heads were all scalped, and the privy parts cut off; a precaution taken by the Turks, that the Christians might not be distinguished from the circumcised, as well as to shew that the victory was theirs.

When the Romans had passed the streights of the mountains, they were attacked again by the Turks, who pursued them in parties, and killed the sick and wounded, who were not in a condition to defend themselves, notwithstanding all the care that could be taken to prevent these hostilities. It is said the sultan, repenting that he had let the prey slip out of his hands, had given his soldiers liberty to commit those violences, which continued till they reached Kone.

The Turks afterwards besieged Claudiopolis; and the emperor ran to its relief with incredible diligence, without any equipage besides his arms. He crossed Bithynia by the light of torches: he passed the nights without sleep; and when fatigue and watching obliged him to take a little rest, he lay upon nothing but straw. At the news of his approach, the Turks betook themselves to flight, and the citizens were filled with joy.

Khliziastlan, who greatly feared the emperor Manuel, no sooner heard of his death, than he went and took Sozopolis; and several provinces voluntarily submitted to him. This prince, who enjoyed a vigorous state of health, though upwards of seventy years of age, understanding

Digitized by Google

that Andronicus was succeeded on the imperial throne by Isaac Angelus, sent Amir Sames with some horse, to make an irruption into Thrace, from whence he returned with many prisoners, and much plunder: for the nations of the east allowed the Romans to remain no longer in repose than they made them presents, or paid them an annual tribute, which was the way of keeping them quiet used by the emperors of that age, who, in this respect, says Nicetas, were weaker than women, who handle nothing but the spindle and distaff.

Although the Germans were masters of Kogni, they would not go into the city, but were content to lodge in the suburbs, and there take the provisions which they wanted. The Turks, apprehending that the emperor intended to conquer their country, endeavoured to gain his affection by false offers of service: but after he had received some of their children in hostage, he left their frontiers with guides, and continued his march into Armenia, where he was received with great honours. In a few days he proceeded to Antioch, and soon after was unfortunately drowned in passing a river.

Alexis, who pretended to be the son of the emperor Manuel, disguised his imposture with so much art, that he imitated the true Alexis, even to the colour of his hair, and hesitation in his speech. He made his first appearance in the cities along the Meander: then going to Armale, discovered himself to a Roman, with whom he lodged, telling him that his father had ordered him to be thrown into the sea, but that he was saved by the compassion of the officers who were charged with that cruel mandate.

Digitized by Google

Going to Kogni, he presented himself before the old sultan, who had not then been driven from the throne, and had even the boldness to reproach him with ingratitude, not to be affected with the disgrace of the son of the emperor who had been his friend. Khliziastlan, deceived by some marks of resemblance which appeared in his face, made him presents, and gave him hopes.

One day, boasting of his birth in the presence of the Roman ambassador, the sultan asked the latter if he was sure that this pretender was Manuel's son? The ambassador answered, it was certain that the son of Manuel had been drowned, and that it was in vain for the impostor to invent a story which would meet with no credit. The false Alexis was highly provoked at this answer; and all the assistance he obtained from the sultan was only letters which permitted him to inlist soldiers; by this means he drew to his party Almuras, Arsan, and other commanders accustomed to rapine. In a short time he gathered eight thousand men, with whom, by force or composition, he reduced many cities upon the Meander.

Several generals, and lastly Alexis, the emperor's brother, were sent against him: but they could do nothing effectual, for fear of being betrayed by their soldiers, who shewed more inclination to serve their pretender than their lawful emperor. Nor was the infection confined to the people only; the principal persons at court were pleased with this illusion: but while the power of this impostor increased every day, and he seemed to be in a fair way of compassing his design, he was suddenly taken off by an unexpected incident; for having returned from Armale

Digitized by Google

to Pisse, and drank more than usual, he was slain by a priest with his own sword. When his head was brought to the sebastocrator Alexis, he pushed back the long hair with his horse-whip, and said, that it was not without reason that so many had been disposed to follow him.

Kilij Arslan died in his capital in the year 1192.

This prince was grandson to the first of that name; and distinguished himself not only by the wars which he carried on against his neighbours the Greeks, but also by his wisdom, justice, and skill in governing his people. He left his son, Gayathoddin Kay Khasraw, for his successor.

Alexis Comnenus, who succeeded Isaac in the empire, had scarcely been three months on the throne, before news arrived of another pretender, a Cilician, who had taken the name of Alexis, and was well received by the sultan of Ancyra, with a design to embarrass the emperor, and obliged him to buy his friendship. Ænopolitus, the eunuch, who was sent against him, being able to do nothing, he went in person, thinking to make an alliance with the Turks; but they refused to conclude a peace with him, unless he paid them down five hundred pounds of coined silver, and three hundred every year, besides four hundred silk vests. Alexis having destroyed some forts, returned to Constantinople, after two months employed in this expedition, leaving the pretender to encrease in power; and doubtless he would have done a great deal of mischief, if his throat had not been cut in the fort of Zangre.

However, the sultan of Ancyra carried on the

Digitized by Google

war, and besieged Diadibris with all his forces. At the end of four months, troops arrived under three young chiefs, Theodore Uranus, Andronicus Katakalon, and Theodore Kasanus; but the Turks laying an ambuscade, attacked them at day-break, put them to flight, killed a great number, and among the prisoners, took two of the generals, whom they dragged, with their hands tied behind their backs, as a spectacle to the besieged. The inhabitants, discouraged at the sight, and being in great want of provisions, delivered up the city, on condition of having the liberty to retire with their families and effects. When the war had lasted a year and a half, the emperor made peace with the sultan, and was not ashamed to agree to the terms which he had refused before the place was besieged.

Theodore Mangafes, after his revolt at Philadelphia, and peace made with the emperor, to avoid the attempts of Basilius Vataces, governor of Thrace, fled to Kay Khosraw, sultan of Kogni, and intreated him to supply him with troops to make war upon the Romans. The sultan, instead of granting his request, only permitted him to assemble some Turks who lived by plunder. Having collected a multitude of these, he invaded the empire, doing incredible damages in Phrygia, especially about Yaodicea and Kone, and in Karia; after which exploits he retired with abundance of prisoners and cattle. The emperor fearing that Mangafes might by his advice corrupt that young prince, who had but lately succeeded his father Kilij Arslan, sent ambassadors, who, by presents, prevailed on him to deliver up that refugee, on condition that he should not receive any corporal punishment.

Digitized by Google

This action of the sultan so displeased his brothers, who had divided with him their father's dominions, that they would have made war upon him, if he had not appeased them, by alleging, that he had not betrayed him, but only sent him back for the good of the state; that he was a banished man whom he had settled again in his own country, that he might no longer persecute others, or be persecuted himself.

Towards the end of the third year of his reign, Alexis, upon a very frivolous occasion, broke the treaty which had been made with Kay Khosroes, sultan of Iconium. This prince stopped two horses which had been sent the emperor by the sultan of Alexandria; and one of them having broken a leg in running, he sent to apologize for both those accidents, and promised to make satisfaction.

Alexis, instead of being pacified with this civil excuse, flew into a rage, and threatened vengeance; but at last took revenge upon himself, by ordering the merchants from Kogni, Romans as well as Turks, to be seized, together with their effects, which were soon squandered away.

Kaykhosraw having made peace with Alexis, repaired to his court, dressed in a robe adorned with gold point, just as his father had done before, to that of the emperor Manuel, during the disputes which he had with his brothers, after the death of their father Massud; but as Manuel assisted Kilij Arslan with forces beyond his hopes, Kaykhosraw received nothing from Alexis but common civilities. He had since returned to Kogni, when he was pursued by Rocnoddin, and forced to fly into Armenia, where he was kindly received by Leon, although formerly he had

Digitized by Google

been at war with him. That prince, however, afforded him no assistance against his brother, with whom he said he was allied, because he foresaw that the war would be very bloody. Upon this Kaykhosraw returned to the emperor, in hopes of being restored by his means; but this second hope being as vain as the first, he continued at Constantinople in a private condition. This revolution happened, according to the computation of the Greeks, in the year 1198.

Rocnoddin Soliman having deprived his brother Kaykhosraw of his share in the empire, in the same manner as he had expelled his other brothers, the whole became again united under one prince.

Not long after this event, the emperor sent Constantine Frankopolis, with six gallies, into the Euxine Sea, under pretence of getting up the wreck of a ship which had been cast away near Kerasonts, in returning from the river Fasis: but in reality to rob the merchants who landed their goods at Amintus. Frankopolis following exactly the orders which he had received, spared no vessel whatever; plundering those which carried commodities to Constantinople, as well as those which had returned, with the price of such as they had sold in that port. They slew some of the merchants, and threw them into the sea; the rest they pillaged in a shameful manner. These presented themselves before the emperor's palace, and entered the great church, with tapers in their hands, to demand justice; but their effects having been already sold, and the money confiscated, they could obtain no redress.

The merchants of Koniyah had recourse to

Digitized by Google

Rocnoddin, who, by his ambassadors, demanded restitution of what had been taken from them, and at the same time proposed a treaty of peace. The emperor laid all the blame on Frankopolis: however, the articles of peace at length taking place, Rocnoddin had fifty minæ of silver to satisfy him and his subjects, besides the promise of a yearly tribute. Some days after, Alexis was convicted of an attempt against the sultan's life; for he had sent a very polite letter to that prince by a Kassian, whom he had bribed to assassinate him; but the bravo being arrested, the plot was discovered, and the peace broken as soon as made, which rupture occasioned the ruin of many cities of Anatolia.

At the same time Michael, the natural son of John the sebastocrator, a froward and passionate young man, having been sent to collect the taxes due from the province of Mylassa, revolted; but being defeated, fled to Rocnoddin, who received him very civilly, and supplied him with troops, with which he plundered the cities about the Meander, and committed horrible cruelties.

Great disputes were excited between Rocnoddin and his brother Kay Khosraw, but at length peace was concluded between them; and Rocnoddin, after he had reigned twenty-four years, died, and was succeeded by his son Kilij Arslan III: but as soon as his uncle Khosraw heard that his brother was dead, he left the castle, where he resided, near Constantinople, and, posting to Koniyah, seized the young king; took possession of the city; stripped him of the rest of his dominions; and ascended the throne himself for the second time. A. D. 1205.

Digitized by Google

Soon after this, Khosraw laid siege to the city of Attalia, imagining that it was not in a condition of defending itself: in this, however, he was mistaken, and obliged to retire, after he had been six days before the place.

Khosraw, after the death of Soliman, united under his authority the whole country of Iconium. Having become a powerful monarch, he took up arms against the Greek emperor, Lascaris; not the same who had replaced the diadem on his head. The two princes met in battle; and Khosraw, whose strength was extraordinary, rushed towards Lascaris, stunned him with a blow of his mace, and dashed him to the ground. The Greek, in falling, drew his sword: the Turk, darting on him a contemptuous look, ordered his people to carry him off the field; but, as he turned his back, Lascaris, who had recovered from the shock, hamstrung Khosraw's horse. The animal reared and fell. In that instant Lascaris thrust his sword into the sultan's body, cut off his head, and fixed it on the point of a lance. The Turks, terrified at this spectacle, fled, and abandoned the victory to the enemy. His sons, Kaykaws and Kackobad successively filled the throne.

A. D. 1219. Of Kaykaws very little is mentioned, except that, after having reigned a single year, he died of a consumption in the lungs. Kaibobad reigned seventeen or eighteen years, and has left behind him the character of a prudent and sagacious prince. He kept a very strict eye over his nobles and dependants. He was serious in his exterior, and possessed great firmness of mind. He is known to European writers under the title of Aladin I. who

Digitized by Google

acquired more reputation than all the sultans of his race, and passed for one of the greatest princes of his time. He generally gained some advantages in all the wars in which he was engaged; but was, at last, obliged to acknowledge the Moguls for his masters. He died suddenly, at a great feast which he made for his nobles and dependants, just as he was boasting of the extent of his dominions and the greatness of his power.

It was under this sultan that both Ortogrol and Othman, his son, founder of the present Ottoman race and empire, served with their followers, and laid the foundation of their future greatness.

Aladin being dead, the princes took the oath of fidelity to his son, Gayathodin Kay Khosraw. In a very short time after, the Moguls advanced, with a design to invade the Rumean territories; but, on Gayothodin sending forces into Armenia, they thought proper to desist. A. D. 1236.

At this time a Turkman prophet, called Baba, appeared at Amasia, who drew after him multitudes of people by the strange tricks which he had performed, in order to deceive them. He sent Isaak, a disciple, in a doctor's gown, through the country, to make proselytes, who succeeded so well, that he collected an army of seven thousand horse and foot. Thus strengthened, they began to propagate their doctrines by force, making war upon all who would not say, "there is no God but God Baba, the apostle of God." They slew a great number of the inhabitants, both Mohammedans and Christians, who refused to follow them; they likewise routed all the

Digitized by Google

troops which opposed them in their way to Amasia.

Gayathodin sent an army against them, in which was a body of Franks; but the Mussulmen giving way through fear, the Franks placed themselves in the front of the battle, and, making a vigorous attack, put the rebels to flight, and killed every man. The two doctors, Baba and Isaak, were taken alive, and put to death.

Gayathodin marched towards the Moguls, with a great number of men and military stores. The two armies met, but, on the first attack, the sultan's forces turned their backs and fled. The sultan, astonished at the event, likewise fled to Cæsarea, carrying with him his wives and children.

The Moguls, no less surprised at the flight of the enemy, kept themselves quiet all that day, suspecting it was only an artifice to draw them into ambuscades; but, as soon as they were informed of the truth of the matter, they pursued them to Cæsarea, where the citizens opposed them for a short time; but at length the Moguls, taking the place by storm, put the principal inhabitants to the sword, torturing them, in order to discover their riches.

After this exploit, they returned, carrying with them their women and children, without entering farther into the sultan's dominions; and the sultan, finding himself in no condition to oppose the enemy, sent ambassadors to desire peace, which was granted him, on condition that he should annually pay a large tribute in money, vests, horses, and other things of value.

Gayathodin sent an army to besiege Tarsus; but, as they were on the point of taking it, news

Digitized by Google

arrived of his death, upon which they retired from before the city in autumn, when there fell very heavy rains.

This prince indulged himself in wine, was idle and loquacious. He led a life very unbecoming his dignity, giving way to pernicious pursuits. He married the daughter of the king of the Georgians, who, however, he loved to such a degree, that he had her image stamped upon his coin. The reverse of some was a lion, with the sun over its head. The astrologers told him, that in case he had the figures engraved which represented his horoscope, he should succeed in all his designs.

He left three sons, Azzodin, Rocnoddin, and Aladin. He declared the eldest his successor, appointing for his tutor and atabeck, Kortay, a person of great integrity and rigid chastity.

Azzodin having succeeded, by his father's appointment, the great officers and nobles took the oath of fidelity, and he was prayed for in the pulpits. In the next year ambassadors came from the great khan at Oktay, requiring the sultan to come and pay him homage; but he excused himself, alleging, that as both the Greek and Armenian kings were his enemies, they would seize the dominions in his absence. He therefore loaded the ambassadors with presents, and sent them away. A. D. 1245.

Some years after, several other ambassadors came in succession to sultan Azzodin, requiring him to go and pay homage to Mangukhan. He accordingly set out; but hearing at Siwas that the omera or chiefs were inclined to place Rocnoddin on his throne, he returned in haste to Koniyah, and dispatched Alaoddin in his room

Digitized by Google

with letters, setting forth, that he had sent his brother, who was no less king than himself, but that he could not come, because his atabeck Kortay was dead, and his enemies, to the west, were at war with him: however, that when he was delivered from the fears of them, he would wait on the khan in person. Alaoddin accordingly set out, but died on the way, before he reached the place where the khan was encamped.

Azzodin, conceiving that he should never be safe while his brother Rocnoddin lived, resolved to put him to death. This design being discovered, the omera contrived his escape: they dressed him in the apparel of a cook's boy, and, putting a bowl, with meat in it, on his head, sent him out of the palace and castle, along with certain boys, who carried victuals to a neighbouring house; then setting him on horseback, they conducted him to Kaysariyah, where a great number of omeras repairing to him, they got together an army, and marched towards Koniyah against Azzodin; but the sultan, marching out with what troops he had about him, put them to flight; and Rocnoddin being taken prisoner, was confined in the castle of Dawalu.

In the following year, Bayeju Nowayn sent a messenger to Sultan Azzodin, requiring some place to winter in with his troops, but the sultan, instead of complying with his request, pretended that he had deserted from his prince; and, collecting forces, gave him battle. However, Azzodin being defeated, Bayeju took his brother out of prison, and put him in possession of all the Rumean dominions.

Digitized by Google

Hulaku sent for Azzodin, sultan of the Rums, and his brother Rocnoddin, who, obeying his summons, he went to meet them, expressing great satisfaction at their coming: then he ordered Azzodin to reign over the country from Kaysariyah to the borders of Greater Armenia; and Rocnoddin to command from Akfera to the sea coast, bounding the territories of the Franks. After this appointment, he began his march for Syria; and, when he drew near the Euphrates, the two brothers, taking their leave, returned with joy to their own dominions.

In the reigns of these two sultans, the Roman empire seems to have been free from the depredations of the Turks; it began to be invaded by them with greater fury than ever; not so much from inclination, which governed their former invasions, as necessity, which obliged them to it in their own defence: for, as the dissensions between the two brothers gave encouragement to the governors towards the borders of the Seljukian dominions to declare themselves independent, so, on the invasion of the Moguls, the Turks, to avoid them, retired westward, in great multitudes, under different commanders; who, the better to secure themselves against those formidable enemies, and gain new possessions in the place of those they had abandoned, fell, with all their force at once, on every side of the Roman territories in Asia, which then were in a most defenceless state; and, in the compass of a few years, subdued the whole.

As the sultanship of Iconium was formed from the wreck of the Constantinopolitan empire, and the impotence of the Greek princes, agitated as they were by interior revolts, to af-

Digitized by Google

ford succour to their subjects of Asia Minor; so likewise the ruin of this latter kingdom was effected by the incessant contests between relatives, fathers, children, uncles, cousins, each aspiring to the sovereignty; hence it became an easy prey to a foreign enemy. We have already observed, that the Turkish dynasty of Ottomans began under Kaikabad. During the reign of his son Khosraw II, appeared the Mogul Tartars, who shortly after acquired sufficient authority to summon the Iconium sultans to their court, and impose commands on them which they durst not disobey. These unhappy princes engaged the Greek emperors to espouse their cause; but their assistance was interested, and served rather to weaken than support their measures. This wretched country was alternately torn to pieces by Greeks, Turks, adventurers of every nation and the princes of the Seljukian dynasty, who continued to give the title to the kingdom, but who enjoyed so little power, that interregnums were frequent, one of which lasted for nineteen years. In process of time, the affairs of the Seljukian princes became so desperate, that they only held their territory as tributaries to the Mogul khans. Among the commanders who headed different armies of the Turks, and invaded the empire in different parts at the same time, Othman was one, who, from a small beginning, in a few years, laid the foundation of a mighty empire, which rose out of the Seljukian dynasty.

END OF THE TENTH VOLUME, OR THE FIRST OF THE MODERN PART.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

OF VOL. X,

OR THE FIRST OF THE MODERN PART.

	Page
Chap. I.—*The Arabs.*	1
Life of Mohammed.	*ib.*
Chap. II.—*Empire of the Arabs under the Caliphs.*	28
Chap. III.—*Of the Mohammedan Religion.*	40
Chap. IV.—*Empire of the Arabs under the Caliphs, continued.*	50
Chap. V.—*Empire of the Arabs under the Caliphs of the Family of Al Abbas.*	73
Chap. VI.—*Empire of the Arabs under the Caliphs of the Family of Al Abbas, continued.*	124
Chap. VII.—*Empire of the Arabs under the House of Al Abbas, continued.*	172
Chap. VIII.—*Empire of the Arabs under the House of Al Abbas, continued.*	201

Digitized by Google

Page

Chap. IX.—*General History of the Turks, and the Empires founded by them in Tartary and the Lower Asia. The Origin of the Country, and different Tribes or Branches of the Turkish Nation; with their public Transactions, till the Destruction of their Empire in Tartary.* - - - - - 246

Chap. X.—*The Seljukians of Iram, or Persia, and of Kerman.* - - - - 262

Chap. XI. *The third Dynasty of the Seljukians, called that of Roum.* - - - 300

Digitized by Google

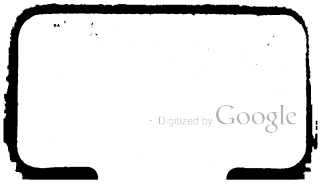
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

DEC 31 1929



Digitized by Google